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Calcutta Review.

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# THE CALCUTTA REVIEW

No. 290, OCTOBER 1917.

## THE WAR AND THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN INDIA.

BY R. B. EWBANK, I.C.S.

**T**HE outbreak of War, so sudden and so unparalleled in previous experience, took Co-operative Societies all over the world entirely by surprise. In India the only severe ordeals that had befallen them in the ten years that had elapsed since the passing of the Co-operative Societies Act had been local famines in parts of the Bombay Presidency and the United Provinces and the Banking crisis of 1913. The famines were not sufficiently widespread to affect the movement as a whole and caused only local and temporary embarrassment owing to the falling off of deposits and the growth of arrears. The Banking crisis was a more serious trial. No less than 57 Joint-stock Banks with a subscribed capital of 411 lakhs were forced into liquidation in the course of a single year. Credit is a delicate growth, and it might well have been supposed that the nervousness, which overcame the general public, would have infected co-operators and checked the inflow of deposits. No such event, however, occurred. In all provinces the total sum deposited in Co-operative Banks and Societies continued to increase at the normal rate, except in the Punjab where, owing to the more flagrant failures of the *swadeshi* banks, progress was slightly

retarded. It was on a movement untested by serious adversity, and ignorant of the extent of its own strength, that the War suddenly burst in 1914.

Before considering the effect of that catastrophe, it may be well to turn aside for a moment and note how the movement stood at that date. There were in all India 17·3 thousand registered Co-operative Societies, of which four hundred were Central Banks or Unions, 16 thousand Agricultural Societies, and nine hundred societies amongst the non-agricultural classes. These societies controlled a total working capital of 896 lakhs, of which 162 lakhs represented permanently owned capital and the balance withdrawable loans and deposits. The total number of members was 824 thousand, of which 664 thousand were agriculturists. The points that call for notice are that the movement was in the main an agricultural movement and that the great bulk of its working capital consisted of withdrawable capital derived from the deposits and loans of members, non-members, and financing institutions.

It was not difficult to predict what would be the first effect of the impact of a great disaster. The minds of the investing public had been unsettled by the banking crisis, and although co-operative societies had weathered that storm, the spirit of confidence had been undermined. In many parts of India there was a panic-stricken rush to withdraw deposits from the Post Office Savings Bank. And the same rush would have undoubtedly been directed towards co-operative societies, had they been in the habit of accepting current deposits. Fortunately the great bulk of deposits were fixed for periods of a year or more, and could not be withdrawn at will. The emergency brought out the fact that the cash reserves of many societies and Banks were dangerously low, but owing to the protection afforded by the fixed deposit system, societies were able to adjust themselves to the new situation in time and in only two provinces was it necessary for the State to

intervene with a cash advance. In the Punjab one lakh was lent by Government to five Central Banking Unions whose resources were insufficient to tide them over the crisis, and another lakh was made available for the use of agricultural societies but was never drawn by them. In the United Provinces an advance of three lakhs was placed at the disposal of the Registrar, and of this sum two and a half lakhs were utilised in supporting 12 institutions which had to meet heavier calls than they could provide for from their liquid resources. One lakh was repaid before 1st April 1915 and the need of further assistance soon disappeared. Throughout the rest of India the local influence of the Directors and the self-control of investors made special measures unnecessary.

The period of commotion and nervousness lasted from August 1914 to January 1915. It might have been much shorter had it not been for the slump that occurred in the prices of all sorts of agricultural produce. The collapse of the jute trade in Bengal, and the unprecedented fall in the price of jute deprived agriculturists of the resource on which they relied for paying their dues to the societies. No part of India was exempt from a similar calamity. Rice in Burma, groundnuts in Madras, and cotton in Northern and Western India were for a time almost unsaleable and ultimately were only disposed of at a ruinous loss. Recoveries therefore dried up at the very moment when they were most needed by societies to meet withdrawals of deposits. As a result Central Banks had to follow a most cautious policy, and, even in provinces where depositors had kept their heads, were compelled by lack of funds to curtail advances and to check further development.

A second stage was reached in the beginning of 1915 after the first novelty and alarm of the War had worn off. The withdrawal of deposits ceased, except in parts of the Punjab, where again one lakh was made available by the State for the support of Central Banks. Public confidence

was re-established, and deposits began again to pour into well-managed societies. Prices rose gradually up to and beyond their former level and a period of prosperity set in. Repayments were good and the demand for loans keen. But the very completeness of the industrial recovery carried with it a difficulty for banking institutions. The revived demand for money for the purposes of trade and commerce made it exceedingly tight and even in remote provinces like Assam complaints were made about the difficulty of raising sufficient funds. The Provincial Co-operative Bank of Bihar and Orissa had at times to pay as much as 8 per cent. on its drawings from the Bank of Bengal. Conditions in the mofussil are, of course, more static than in big trading centres, and the vast majority of mofussil societies are not rapidly affected by changes in the money market. But the general dearness of money all over India naturally depressed the price of all gilt-edged securities. Figures are not available to show what was the amount of such securities held by Co-operative institutions, but they may be estimated at something between 20 and 30 lakhs. The Committee on Co-operation had recently completed its investigations and published its Report. One of its most revolutionary recommendations had insisted that societies must provide themselves with fluid resources greatly in excess of the standard which they had been previously in the habit of maintaining. Although the wisdom of this proposal was widely questioned, many societies hastened to increase their holdings of Government securities. They found themselves saddled with an investment of declining value and in many cases the whole profit which they had earned in the course of the year was swallowed up by the margin of loss. The Provincial Co-operative Bank of Burma for instance had to write down its stock by Rs. 53,500 and found itself at the end of the year with a net loss of Rs. 9,000. The Lahore Central Bank had to write down its securities

from 96 to 77 thousand and ended with a loss of Rs. 2,000. The persistent decline in all classes of Government stock made the provision of adequate fluid resource a much more costly and risky business than was ever foreseen, and put many thriving institutions to serious loss.

These difficulties were not however serious enough to hinder progress sensibly. In the second year of war the number of societies increased to 19·6 thousand with a membership of 918 thousand and a working capital of 10·3 crores. There was a fall in members' deposits, which has not been explained, but the deposits of the outside public which in 1914-15 had increased by only 38 lakhs leapt up by 99 lakhs in 1915-16, and similar increases took place under most other heads. The vitality of the movement was shown in places by the demand of societies to be allowed to contribute to the various War Relief Funds. In this good work the Punjab took the lead. Its societies in 1915 contributed no less than Rs. 67,762 to these funds. The societies of *Jullundur* district alone, not content with furnishing a hospital at Jullundur for the wounded, supplied 50 beds to St. John's Ambulance and sent consignments of 9,940 pairs of socks to the front. In the following year they continued their liberality by subscribing Rs. 9,000 for the purchase of a motor ambulance. Though contributions were offered in many other parts of India, they were nowhere made on this princely scale.

The tale breaks off here, since the Registrars' Reports for the year 1916-17 have not yet been published. But since the present writer happens to be connected with the Co-operative Department in the Bombay Presidency, he is able to carry the record, as far as Western India is concerned, down to the present date. The tightness of the money market in Bombay intensified during the third year of War, and the Provincial Bank was compelled to pay an average of 1 per cent. more on the deposits held by it than in the preceding year. As a result it had to raise the rate

at which it lent funds to primary societies by  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. This was an event of great importance since the margin previously earned by societies had been less than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The raising of the rate has made it more difficult for societies to build up reserves and to meet working expenses, and has rendered it almost impossible for them to contribute to the expenses of their own audit and supervision. In the beginning of 1916 the situation became still more acute owing to the issue of the  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. War Loan which made a further rise in the market rates of interest inevitable. The future of the money market being so uncertain, the Directors of the Provincial Bank were compelled to abandon the work of debt redemption and to limit their loans to periods of one or two years only in order that funds might be ready at hand to meet emergencies. The margin of profit on which primary societies are working has already shrunk to less than 2 per cent., and the only resource now open to them seems to be the raising of their lending rate to individual members to a pitch that will leave them a working margin of not less than 3 per cent. If this is decided upon, it will be by far the gravest effect which the War has yet had upon the movement on this side of India.

The embarrassments of societies were increased, though not very materially, by the energetic canvas on behalf of the War Loan, which was set on foot throughout the Presidency. In some cases deposits were withdrawn and in others the funds due to societies in repayment of loans were diverted to postal cash certificates. Recruitment throughout the Deccan was carried on vigorously and towards the end of the year the shortage of labour became acute and agricultural wages rose to unheard-of heights. This was counterbalanced by the remarkably good prices obtained for cotton and other produce, but jaggery, which requires more labour than most crops and which is largely financed through co-operative societies receded to its

pre-War level. However the movement is a vigorous and healthy one, and rural societies in Bombay do not depend on Central Banks for an average of more than 50 per cent. of their working capital. The difficulties mentioned were real but they have not yet sensibly affected local rates of interest in the mofussil. Progress has therefore continued in all respects as rapidly as in the years before the War. If this is true of an industrialized province like Bombay, it may be assumed that other provinces have as yet been even less touched by the pinch of rising rates. But unless the increasing stringency of the money market is unexpectedly arrested, it may be conjectured that conditions will be gradually established in the next year or two which will make further progress very difficult unless an all-round raising of lending rates is agreed to by societies.

In Germany the Co-operative movement has not remained a passive spectator of the War. Distributive societies have helped the State by taking over the entire organisation of the supply of cattle food. Co-operative granaries and bakeries have worked hand in hand with local bodies in arranging the even distribution of food and enforcing the prescribed rations on the population. Their leading officials have been granted important posts in the Food Dictator's Office. Central Banks have taken special measures to ensure the return of gold to the Bank of the Empire. Above all, every class of credit society, but more particularly the urban societies, have contributed lavishly to all four War Loans. The Schulze Delitzsch Union's subscriptions were as follows :—

1st loan	...	80	million	marks.
2nd „	...	265	„	„
3rd „	...	354	„	„
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Total 1,003 (= £50,150,000)



The subscription of the Haas Union to the same loans amounted to £49,175,000, and those of the Raiffeisen Union, which had seceded from the Imperial Union before the War, to £13,350,000.

Of course a movement that has been growing for 60 years is in a very different position to one that has only just completed its first decade of existence, and beside such figures as these the contributions of Indian Co-operative Societies may seem very modest. But all over India a genuine attempt was made by societies to help Government according to their power both by inducing members to subscribe to the War Loan individually and by investing funds in their corporate capacity. The results of this effort have not yet been published. But in the Bombay Presidency the figures reported up to 1st August show that, apart from the individual contributions of members, 364 societies in their corporate capacity have subscribed Rs. 4,43,570. The Bengal Co-operative Journal reported recently that 24 Central Banks in Bengal had subscribed Rs. 1,23,164 to the War Loan and that a further list would be published shortly. When the results in other provinces are announced, there is ground for hoping that in spite of the urgent need of most classes of societies for a larger working capital than they at present command, they will not be found to have failed in self-sacrifice and their contribution will not be unworthy of their present status. So far the effect of the War on the Agricultural Movement alone has been considered. Non-agricultural societies do not depend on Central Banks for their finance and so have been more independent of changes in market conditions. The class of Non-agricultural societies most seriously hit by the War has been those composed mainly of hand-loom weavers, of which there are about 100 in existence in India. The rapid rise in the price of raw material and the virtual impossibility of buying dyes at all except at wildly extravagant prices brought the weaving industry for a

time to a standstill. Large numbers of skilled weavers, under pressure of starvation, abandoned their ancestral craft and sunk to the ranks of unskilled labour. It was not until the end of the second year of War, when the huge stocks of pre-War piece-goods that had been accumulated by the mills had been exhausted, and the agricultural demand had revived, that the market began to recover. In the meantime irremediable damage was done to a very beautiful old handicraft. In Western India the 30 existing weavers' societies were at first nearly overwhelmed by the crisis but were helped by generous grants from the Imperial War Relief Fund amounting to Rs. 17,500 in all. By means of this timely aid they triumphantly tided their members through the period of stress, and with the return of more favourable conditions are now as flourishing as ever. It is only in silk-weaving centres that conditions are still precarious, but there are signs that here too in the course of the next eight months the normal market demand may reappear.

It would be tedious to analyse the effects of the War on other trades and crafts. Enough has been said to show that the Co-operative movement has borne its share of vicissitudes during the last three anxious years ; but it has surmounted them all without serious difficulty and has continued to expand as rapidly as in the days of peace. Its contributions to War Funds and subscriptions to the War Loan have been the smallest part of its service to the State. By steadily continuing to finance agriculture, it has already played a great part in increasing the production of Indian food-stuffs and cotton for the benefit of the Empire as a whole, and as its working capital grows and its effect on the productive power of the ryots becomes more marked, the movement bids fair to become an Imperial asset of first-rate importance.

R. B. EWBANK.

*Poona.*

## VILLAGE GODLINGS.

BY J. ARTHUR JONES.

**M**Y interest in this theme arises from the fact that I practise the rare art of walking. I am thus not limited, like the unfortunate owners of motor cars, to the highways. I can roam through the jungle and follow the village paths. My wanderings have taught me that a country-side in Bengal is not less beautiful or less interesting than the rural scenery of Cheshire or Somerset. One misses, it is true, the inexpressible sweetness of the tedded hay, the fragrance of the honeysuckle, and the musk rose with its dewy wine, of which the poets sing. But, walking along village paths in the dusk at certain times of the year, the "embalmed darkness" is much more perceptible than in any part of England known to me. The lanes and jungles of Bengal, its copses and ditches, have charms of their own, and in England, where the grime of industry stretches further and further into the country, you will have to go a long way to discover any village as picturesque as the Bengal hamlet with its artistic neatness and equally artistic disorder. Anyone who cannot appreciate all this varied beauty is well advised to march round the Calcutta maidan. Rural delights are too subtle for him.

It was in the course of one of my earliest walks that I first encountered the tree of the godling of snakes. Its peculiar appearance at once attracts attention. The gaunt arms which it stretches out are bare except for clusters of leaves at the joints. A closer inspection—it was late evening—showed the white face of a godling lying on the grass near. I subsequently learned that the tree was known as the mansua or mansa tree, and I discovered from works of reference that it belongs to the genus *Euphorbia* or

Spurgewort. I found it stated, moreover, that in some parts of Eastern Bengal and Assam *Euphorbia antiquorum* is almost sacred and is supposed to protect the garden in which it is planted, while *Euphorbia nerifolia* has the power of safeguarding people against snake-bite. Both these *Euphorbias* are sacred to Mansa, the goddess of serpents.

Since I first came across the mansa tree I have noticed it in several places, sometimes singly, sometimes many together forming a hedge. Even at this early stage a simple yet profound question suggests itself. It seems clear that if the tree is regarded as possessing a miraculous power of keeping away snakes, one would be enough. On the other hand, the villager who grows a mansa hedge apparently puts his trust in some property of the tree which the snake dislikes, and he rightly thinks that one will not suffice. Here is a little problem whose investigation would help to show what is the real feeling of the Indian peasant towards the mansa and other sacred trees, and until a solution is found no real progress can be made towards combating his superstition. The same question arises in regard to the *tulsi* plant, which is grown and tended with so much care by Hindus.

I may mention as a further complication of the problem that in the Howrah district Mansa, the goddess of snakes, is represented either by the mansa tree, which may be one of two species of *Euphorbia*, or by a bit of stone which is carved in the form of a female seated on a snake or by a block of stone of no special shape smeared with vermilion. I take these particulars from the *District Gazetteer*. On this side of the Hooghly I have not observed any carved stone, or vermilion-coloured stone either, nor have I remarked any indication that the mansa tree is the object of worship.

I now turn to the godling which lay on the ground near the tree. I want first to point out that while I have

several times found the godling placed near the mansa tree I have also come upon him as often in solitary state. In a lane leading to Boral, a village separated from Kaurapukur, the well-known L.M.S. Mission station, by a great stretch of paddy-fields—I found two of him ensconced under a pipal tree. It is not uncommon to find many of the same godlings placed on a low table or altar of cemented brick. I have seen such a shrine littered with the *débris* of several images. I have seen one with a family of erect and flawless godlings. Occasionally he is perched on the top of a mound of earth and I once saw him established in the midst of a thick clump of undergrowth in which a narrow passage was left for the worshipper to approach the sacred centre.

I confess with humility that I have never been able to make sure of the name of this wide-spread godling. Any passing villager, specially a Mahomedan, seems to be rather shame-faced or contemptuous when questioned about the effigy—as if it belonged to an order of ideas which he knows to be antiquated or vulgar. The name which is commonly given is Dakshin Rai, a godling who is supposed to give protection against tigers. There are some difficulties in the way of accepting this identification. In the first place, it must be many years since a tiger roamed the jungles beyond Tollygunge, and in the absence of any actual necessity for the cult it is hard to believe that the villagers will year after year purchase new effigies for security against a danger which does not exist. In the second place, Dakshin Rai is worshipped on the Howrah side either as a stone image of a man seated on a tiger or as a water-pot. At least, so says the *Gazetteer*.

Now the Tollygunge godling is of a quite different character. He is fashioned of burnt clay, and consists of a face—not a rounded head—on which the conventional lineaments of a Hindu god have been painted. The face tapers to a point above and thickens to a pedestal below.

In the pedestal a hole is left through which a wooden stake can be placed to keep the godling erect. When he is found prostrate, what has happened is that the wood has rotted or been snapped by a gust of wind.

To complete these observations, for whose scrappiness I can only plead in excuse that I am not a theologian or a professed student of folklore, I ought to add one curious and perhaps significant incident. When I was passing through a hamlet on the south side of the Kaurapukur Khal I found the godling mounted on a mound of earth near a mansa tree. But what was remarkable was that close by was a life-size clay model of a crocodile. I was disposed to think that as the Hindu gods and goddesses have each his or her favourite charger—that of Kartick, for instance, is the peacock—some devotee either of Mansa or of the godling had shown his piety by fashioning this crocodile; but whether it was designed for the service of Mansa or the god was not evident. I told the Rev. J. H. Brown of my discovery, and he promised to make some inquiries. He subsequently informed me that I was on a wrong trail. What the villagers said was that a sanyasi who was about to make a pilgrimage to Saugor, where he feared to encounter crocodiles, had constructed the image of the beast by way of securing its favour. This explanation seemed to me to be far-fetched in the most literal sense, for Kaurapukur Khal, though it flows into Tolly's Nulla and thence into the Hooghly, would have to carry the story of this pious work a long way if it was to propitiate the slimy monsters of Saugor. My scepticism was increased by the fact that some years later I found on the same spot another crocodile, the creation of a much less skilled hand. It is hardly probable that two sanyasis bound for Saugor would visit the same spot before their departure and take the same method of insuring their safety. My own belief is that my original view was right, more especially as in these villages potters are found who produce quite

creditable portrait busts as well as domestic utensils. If I am right, this tribute to Mansa or Dakshin Rai is a striking indication of the strength and persistence of the cult.

A number of questions arise out of the facts which I have mentioned. There is comparatively little difficulty in understanding why the mansa tree has been invested with a divine character. The Indian peoples, as they passed into the phase of nature worship, were attracted by various trees and plants which possessed some striking singularity of appearance or curative power. But in the case of the godling I am curious to know the full ceremonial of his worship. A villager buys the clay image in the bazar for a pice or two. He places it under a tree. At what stage does it become a god?

On this matter I have not been able to get any exact information. The godlings on the other side of the Hooghly are variously consecrated. Dharma-raj, the godling of healing, is worshipped by a priest of such low castes as the Doms, Pods or Bagdis. Ghata Karna, the godling of skin diseases, is worshipped in the spring by an old woman who recites mantras. For the worship of Ola-bibi, the goddess of cholera, a Mahomedan priest is employed. For other godlings Brahmans are engaged to make the appropriate offerings. I should like to know whether my godling is installed in any of these ways. I want to know also when the image ceases to have any sanctity. Does it depend on the taste of the worshipper or on a period of days? As I have said, I have seen a large valhalla of the Tollygunge godling; from which it follows either that several are consecrated at once or that some persons preserve the godling from year to year. Does the godling intervene for the protection of his proprietor only or for all who choose to do him reverence? Finally, I am anxious to know what relation exists between these godlings and Hinduism? Is the worshipper of godlings a Hindu? Does he

combine his cult of the mansa tree with the adoration of Kali?

In my quest for knowledge I went to Dr. Annandale, who takes a learned interest in such matters. He assured me that practically nothing was known of the godlings, and that nothing was likely to be known until an anthropological survey of the population in the vicinity of Calcutta had been carried out. Doubtless he is right. There seems to be ground, at any rate, for believing that on the Howrah side the prevalence of godlings is due to the large predominance of low castes in the population. The lower castes here, as everywhere, are ignorant and conservative. Brahmanical Hinduism has made little impression on their faith, and they cling to the deities which their forefathers worshipped.

The precise number of Animists or godling worshippers cannot be determined. In the last census the total is given as 10,295,000. But Sir E. Gait calls attention to the fact that this is a minimum estimate which includes only those who have not yet made a practice of worshipping Hindu gods. The census returns are in reality misleading. Animists who make offerings at Hindu shrines have, in Southern India more especially, been reckoned as Hindus, whereas in the opinion of Sir Edward Gait, "it would be no exaggeration to say that in that part of the Empire the majority of the so-called Hindus are still in essentials Animists.

"It is somewhat refreshing," says the compiler of the *Howrah Gazetteer*, "to turn from these survivals of primitive Animistic beliefs to one of the latest developments of Hinduism—the Ramkrishna Mission." It may be refreshing to dismiss these ancient cults but it is surely unwise to neglect the beliefs which represent the actual every-day religion of men and women who are counted by the hundred thousand while the adherents of the Ramkrishna Mission are numbered by dozens. Moreover, while the



Ramkrishna cult seems to be a feeble plagiarism of Christianity the godlings are the objects of a genuine popular faith, as spontaneous as it is ancient.

It cannot be doubted, I think, that in gazing on these godlings we are in the presence of one of the most ancient of the persistent efforts of man to penetrate the mysteries of the Non-Ego. Before the great gods of Hinduism had been heard of, the protection of the godlings was invoked against wild beasts and snakes, against disease and death. In the near vicinity of great triumphs of material civilisation, within hearing of the whistle of the locomotive and of the whirr of power-driven machinery, trees and water-jars are still regarded as haunts of deities or as being themselves divine.

J. ARTHUR JONES.

*Calcutta.*

## BRITISH POETS IN INDIA.

BY T. O. D. DUNN.

**T**HIS brief essay deals with the poetry written by Englishmen in India throughout a period of more than one hundred years. At a time when at least one Indian has captured the imagination not only of his own countrymen in their mother tongue, but of English readers by his command of a lucid English prose style, it is well to remember that the cult of literature for its own sake has never wholly been neglected by Englishmen in India. It cannot be argued that this cult was ever greatly pervasive or productive ; but its followers have left much to their credit, and much that, in more favourable circumstances, might have been better remembered.

It is fitting that in its beginnings the poetry of Englishmen in India should belong exclusively to the 18th century. The traditions of that great age will die hard in the East ; and it would be strange if the period that covers the career of Clive and of Warren Hastings had left no literary work of permanence. Towards the close of the 18th century English poetry had become susceptible to those subtle influences that were moulding European thought into new and unexpected forms. The whole civilized world had felt the shock of change ; and the history of India had been given definite direction by the great events of the time. England and France had fought to a final conclusion their duel in the East ; and the shadow of Napoleonic dominance in India had been dissipated by the lightning of Nelson's guns at the Battle of the Nile. It is a significant incident, that despatch of a swift messenger vessel to tell Bombay that the fleets of France had been annihilated ; and equally significant, that thankful gift of

ten thousand pounds made by the East India Company to the great Admiral. In these triumphant days began the literary work of Englishmen in India ; and as befitted the 18th century there was a certain seriousness of purpose in this beginning.

To Sir William Jones the heaped treasures of oriental learning made as urgent an appeal as the hoarded wealth of the Mogul Empire to the gentlemen adventurers of the Company. His verse became a vehicle of scholarly instruction ; and in a series of odes he embodied the main religious conceptions of Hinduism. These odes have the stately dignity that derives from Milton and Gray. Their presentation of a great theme is nearly always adequate ; and they are a noble tribute to the mythology of the East—a tribute but little recognised in days when political frenzy will take any course but that of patient study of the last two hundred years of Indian history. The discovery and appreciation of verse like this, descriptive of some of the highest flights of the religious imagination, might well be a task for some Indian University of the future. Its dignified movement, that quality of the Miltonic style that the 18th century never forgot to admire, is in perfect keeping with the greatness of its theme. The ending of the Hymn to Narayen is typical :

My soul absorb'd One only Being knows,  
Of all perceptions one abundant source,  
Whence every object every moment flows ;  
Suns hence derive their force,  
Hence planets learn their course ;  
But suns and fading worlds I view no more :  
God only I perceive ; God only I adore.

Sir William Jones died in 1794, less than ten years after the departure from India of Warren Hastings. It is worth remembering that, having undertaken political responsibilities in the East, Englishmen were not slow to begin the sympathetic study of Indian life and thought. Before

the century had closed, and less than a generation after the Dewani of Bengal, Behar and Orissa had passed into the hands of Robert Clive, English scholars and philanthropists were at work. The motives of English activity in India soon ceased to be purely commercial. Did not the educational system of our own time originate in the year 1792, when Charles Grant of the Company's service wrote his famous despatch in anticipation of the point of view adopted by Macaulay more than forty years later ?

Of works exclusively of the 18th century there is one of considerable interest in "The Letters of Simkin the Second, Poetic recorder of all the proceedings upon the trial of Warren Hastings." This appeared in 1791, and was the production of Captain Ralph Broome of the service of the East India Company, on the Bengal Establishment. The whole work is divided into a number of so-called letters in the burlesque manner of the time, and sets forth with a witty and careless grace the various stages of the famous trial. It was probably a hobby of the author's retirement ; and belongs to an age when the trick of pleasing expression in verse seems to have come as easy to the gentlemen of England as the nimble handling of a rapier.

The 19th century opens with a group of writers two of whom are pre-eminent : Dr. John Leyden and Bishop Heber. The remaining names are of great interest : Henry Derozio, Sir John Malcolm and Major Broughton. The latter outlived all the others and died in 1835. These five authors, then, belong entirely to the earliest portion of the 19th century ; and their work reflects the literary tendencies of that time. Heber has much of the gentle spirit of William Cowper. Of his poems written in India, the best known is the Evening Walk in Bengal, a brief work showing delicate observation and true power of description. The pathos of the lines addressed to his wife sounds that first note of sadness that has never ceased in

the literature of the exile—a note that recurs with mournful vigour in the work of Leyden who died prematurely in 1811. The latter is the most striking literary figure of his time in India. He was a Border Scot, the friend of the great Sir Walter, and imbued with a passionate spirit of patriotism strengthened by his experiences in the East. The music of the Border minstrelsy lives again in the march and stir of his poem on the Battle of Assaye; and there is nothing more intense in Anglo-Indian literature than the feeling that glows in his sombre address to an Indian gold coin. Leyden was devoted to oriental studies and rose to responsible position in Calcutta: but at no time does he appear to have shaken off a certain despondency of temper that was in no sense relieved by his brooding upon the darker aspects of Hindu ritual. There is a certain element of reluctant disgust at superstition in most of his work. His verses written at Saugor Island in 1807 are almost as intense as those addressed to an Indian gold coin:

Not all blue Ganga's mountain flood,  
That rolls so proudly round thy fane,  
Shall cleanse the tinge of human blood,  
Nor wash dark Saugor's impious stain:  
The sailor journeying on the main,  
Shall view from far the dreary isle  
And curse the ruins of the pile  
Where Mercy ever sued in vain.

Far different is the light and graceful work of Major Broughton. His "Selections from the Popular Poetry of the Hindus," published in 1814, is prefaced by a brief dissertation on the origin of his translations. Left alone with his regiment, he encouraged the sepoys to write down the folk-songs of their native villages and these he turned into English verse. His skill in the manipulation of English metre is remarkable; and the grace of his renderings, whether true or not to the original, merits

a longer remembrance than they have earned. There is a pleasing epigrammatic quality about his work that is curiously reminiscent of the 17th century—a quality at is consistently maintained.

Your beast perverse ; your man a rogue ;  
Your heart to amorous courses given ;  
Your friend a fool ; your master mean ;  
Can greater plagues be sent by Heaven ?

Dinner to seek abroad ; a house  
Built in some little dirty town .  
Long journeys on cold rainy days ;  
Are miseries all mortals own.

Yourself with wantons sporting oft,  
While wife at home to love is given ;  
An itch to cheat, oppress, or rob ;  
A child, whom from your love you've driven.

Folly, old age, a sickly frame,  
A lack of means, a memory gone ; --  
These, these are hell, a present hell ;  
Talk not of others still to come !

Surely the author of such lines might have been at home amongst those wits of the court of the second Charles whom Pope described as "the mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease." Of the same company is Sir John Malcolm, soldier, diplomatist and historian, whose verses were not designed for general publication. In 1829 he had printed privately at the American Mission Press of Bombay his "Miscellaneous Poems," one autograph copy of which exists in the Imperial Library at Calcutta. The opening poem is descriptive of Persia and is written in rhyming couplets. How quaintly from the world of powdered hair and buckled shoon sound the following lines :—

Not with more joy the feather'd tribe take wing  
From arctic snows to meet the opening spring,  
Than Britain's sons from Asia's regions fly,  
To court repose ~~beneath a northern sky.~~ 1426.

This might have graced the pages of the Anti-Jacobin or been written by William Hayley of Earsham, Esq. But these lines are not characteristic of Sir John Malcolm's poetical work. He had read his Moore and knew the poets of the romantic revival. His song for an anniversary dinner in celebration of the Battle of Assaye is a spirited production; and his lines on the death of Leyden are distinguished by fine feeling and freedom of expression.

The last of this early group of writers is, perhaps, the most interesting of them all. Henry Derozio was born in Calcutta in 1809. Here he received his education; and by the year 1820 he had begun to publish verse. In 1826 he was given an appointment in the Hindu College; and in 1831, after the enjoyment of much poetical effort and a few stimulating friendships, he died of cholera. His career had that tragic brevity associated with genius; but it would be wrong to assert that his work contained any great promise of ultimately brilliant achievement. The romantic revival, as illustrated in the poetry of Byron, stimulated Derozio's facile gift of expression; but neither in the *Pakeer of Jungheera*, his longest poem, nor in his shorter pieces almost entirely Western in theme, is there any sign of genuine originality, or of that intellectual quality inseparable from true poetry. His expression is nearly always lucid and happy; but sustained vigour is beyond him. His poem on the Abolition of Suttee is in parts of considerable promise:—

Red from his chambers came the morning sun  
 And frowned, dark Ganges on thy fatal shore,  
 Journeying on high; but when the day was done  
 He set in smiles, to rise in blood no more.  
 Hark! heard ye not? the widow's wail is over;  
 No more the flames from impious pyres ascend,  
 See mercy now primeval peace restore,  
 While pagans glad the arch etherial rend,  
 For India hails at last her father and her friend.

The Fakcer of Jungheera, a poem with a thin vein of narrative, has certain fluent lines of beauty in the hymn to the Sun : -

God of this beauteous world ! whom earth and heaven  
Adore in concert, and in concert love,  
Whose praise is hymned by the eternal seven  
Bright wheeling minstrels of the courts above.

God of Eternity ! whose golden throne  
Is borne upon the wings of angels bright ;  
God of all goodness, thou art God alone,  
Circled with glory, diademed with light.

Verse of this kind is probably unique in the whole record of Anglo-Indian literature ; and, for the plain reason, that other writers avoided its production. Leyden, Heber and Malcolm had their own themes and their own manner. Derozio was a clever and impressionable boy with a precocious gift of expression, who found in the inflammatory literature of the romantic revival in Europe his method and his inspiration.

A friend and patron of Derozio was Henry Meredith Parker of the Bengal Civil Service. He published "The Draught of Immortality" in 1827 ; and much later, a miscellany of prose and verse, called *Bole Ponjis* (the punch bowl). His work marks a real departure from the style and subject of the earlier group of poets ; and while his first verse belongs in date to the time of Derozio, his later poems are of a distinctly modern tone, and set a fashion of light and graceful humour that has fortunately continued to distinguish Anglo-Indian poetry. Parker left India in 1842. He belongs entirely to pre-mutiny days ; and may have associated with the learned Macaulay whose sole pastime in Calcutta seems to have been the perusal of the classical and mediæval literature of Europe. If by the year 1835, Anglo-Indian verse had established any tradition, it was in the line of the solemn dignity of



Jones, Leyden and Heber. But here was an author who recorded in verse his musings at the sight of an Adjutant bird, who drew dainty vignettes of his quaint old merchant friends, and had sympathy enough to portray with fine feeling the sorrow of the Mussulman soldiers at the death of Tippu Sultan. Parker is indubitably the first of our Anglo-Indian poets to strike a distinct note of originality. His verse encourages quotation. The Adjutant, a Bengal Eclogue, is characteristic of his style. On a hot night in the rains Parker holds converse with the familiar bird; and struck with its air of antiquity, he conjures up the possible scenes of its past from the time of Alexander to that of Clive. The stanza and the method of the poem are those of Horace Smith in his "Address to a Mummy."

So hasten, tell me, for my soul's on fire  
Thinking of those great days of glorious strife,  
When Gunga's hollow banks rung with that lyre  
And shell of Britain, called the drum and life;  
Did'st thou behold those heroes who of yore  
Batter'd Budge-Budge, and took Chandanagore?

Men who prepared ambrosial Sangaree,  
And double Sangaree or Sangororum;  
Now took a fleet, now sold a pound of tea,  
Weighed soap, storm'd forts, held princes *in terrorem*,  
Drank, fought, smoked, lied, went home, and, good papas,  
Gave diamonds to their little boys for taws.

Happy those times, my Adjutant, when "Chic  
Ruled Provinces for four half crowns per day.  
Yet prospered somehow, even as the sheaves  
Which dreaming Pharaoh saw. Fat kine were they;  
We are the lean - nor were their gleanings less  
Through any freedom of the Indian Press.

Here is the backward glance of one who stood at the parting of the ways, within living memory of the men who combined trade and statesmanship. The "few lines in honour of the late Mr. Simms, Senior Assistant to Messrs. Sheringham, Leith, Badgery and Hay" are of a

type that must always charm. The Boxwalla of more than half a century ago was a dapper fellow as he is to-day, and our spacious Hooghly a popular place of resort. It is unfortunate that our exiled poets have not given us more pictures of this kind :

Who did not know that Office Jaun of pale Pomona green,  
With its drab and yellow lining, and picked out black  
between,  
Which down the Esplanade did go at the ninth hour of the  
day?  
We ne'er shall see it thus again, -- Alas and well-a-day !

With its bright brass patent axles, and its little hog maned  
tatts,  
And its ever jetty harness, which was always made by  
Watts,  
The harness black and silver, and the ponies of dark grey :  
And shall we never see it more -- Alas and well-a-day !

With its very tidy coachman with a very old grey beard,  
And its pair of neat clad saycees, on whom no spot appeared,  
Not sitting lazily behind, but running all the way  
By Mr. Simm's little coach -- Alas, and well-a-day !

And famous was the table that good Mr. Simms did keep  
With his home fed ducks, his Madras fowls, and gram fed  
Patna sheep,  
And the fruits from his own garden, and the dried fish  
from the Bay,  
Sent up by bold Branch Pilot Stout - Alas, and well-a-day !

And every Doorga Poojah would good Mr. Simms explore,  
The famous river Hooghly up as high as Barrackpore,  
And visit the manageric, and in his pleasant way,  
Declare that all the bears were bores -- Alas, and well-a-day !

Then, if the weather it was fine, to Chinsura he'd go,  
With his nieces three in a Pinnace, and a smart young  
man or so,  
In bright blue coats, and waistcoats, which were sparkling  
as the day,  
And curly hair, and white kid gloves, a lover-like array.

And at Chinsura, they walked about and then they  
 went to tea,  
 With the antient merchant Van der Zank, and the widow  
 Van der Zee,  
 They were old friends of Mr. Simms, and parting he  
 would say,  
 "Perchance we ne'er may meet again,"—Alas, and well-  
 a-day !

Parker was the first Anglo-Indian poet who might have been acceptable to the editors of *Punch* towards whose pages so much of our modern verse has been directed. Here is the true *Punch* note, if such a phrase may pass, in Calcutta stanzas for the month of May, an eulogy of arctic weather :

Happy the man, whose hair and beard  
 Are glittering stiff with ice and snow,  
 Whose purple face with sleet is scar'd,  
 His nose also.

Happy the man, again I sing,  
 Who thus can freeze his life away,  
 Far from this hot blast's blustering,  
 At Hudson Bay.

But all in vain I sigh for lands  
 Where happy cheeks with cold look blue,  
 While here i' the shade the mercury stands  
 At ninety-two.

But Henry Meredith Parker leads one astray into the paths of copious quotation. He has a pretty wit and a graceful manner of expression ; and was the first Anglo-Indian poet to rise completely above the despondency of exile. If the current phrases of criticism may be applied to a literary age so attenuated as that of the 19th century in India, then Parker may be given the honour of having marked the beginning of a new epoch.

Of the same period was James Hutchinson, a surgeon and secretary to the Medical Board of Bengal. When on

leave at the Cape of Good Hope in 1837 he wrote "The Sunyassee : An Eastern Tale and Other Poems" which was published a year later in Calcutta. Curiously enough this work was republished about ten years afterwards with a fresh title, *The Pilgrim of India*, and a dedication to the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company. The earlier edition had been dedicated to the people of Scotland. It is an amusing instance of a work revived; and the curious might like to know the reason of the revival and of the altered dedication. This, however, may be fairly left with James Hutchinson whose work is of distinct literary value. *The Pilgrim of India* records the career of a soldier unfortunate in love who passed through various experiences until in the end he became an ascetic. The verse is skilful, and the style is curiously reminiscent of some of Byron's narrative works. The author was an ardent admirer of this poet, and wrote a poem of intense feeling upon his death. *The Pilgrim of India* contains three admirable lyrics, one of which, the Pindaree's Song, is a vigorous piece of warlike verse. Contemporary with Hutchinson was John William Kaye who came to India in 1833. He has the distinction of being the founder of "The Calcutta Review." He started this journal in 1844; and during a long and successful career he found time for literary pursuits. His verse possesses austerity and vigour, and deals frequently with the pathos of exile.

The year 1850 is a central date around which at least six authors may be grouped. David Lester Richardson who was A.-D.-C. to Lord William Bentinck in 1835, adopted the career of teacher and man of letters, and retired in 1861. R. T. H. Griffith continued his work as a diligent translator of Sanskrit poetry from the year 1852; a type of literary exercise in which William Waterfield the Bengal Civil Service excelled, although the amount

of his production is slight. Henry George Keene, who came to India in 1847, was a diligent historian, who found time for verse. Charles Arthur Kelly has been remembered by his poem on Delhi and by his lines in memory of Sir James Outram. Near to this central date comes the great name of Edwin Arnold. His career in India was brief, covering the years from 1856 to 1861 when he was Principal of the Dekhan College in Poona. During this time he wrote much of his least known poetry; and not until after his settlement as a journalist in London, did he make his chief appeal to the literary world. From all the writers of this time it is not possible within reasonable space to give copious quotations. Their work is always pleasing and graceful, and deals with a variety of themes. Richardson is well remembered by his Masonic song, by the fine feeling of his lines on David Hare, the Calcutta philanthropist, and by his vigorous translation from the folksongs of the Khoonds. He did one service to letters by appending to his selections from the British poets a brief anthology of Anglo-Indian writers. The volume of Griffith's work was enormous. Apart from its value as translation, it makes a direct poetical appeal in such short poems as the Suppliant Dove. Keene has an interesting poem on Clive's Dream before the Battle of Plassey: and, after Henry Torrens, is the first of our Anglo-Indian poets to achieve a good drinking song. The quality of Waterfield's verse makes the reader wish for more of the same kind. His free translations, as in the Hymn to Indra and the Song of Kalindi, must rank with the best of this type.

But to Sir Edwin Arnold the reader must turn, if he desires to understand the poetic inspiration of the East, not necessarily in such prolonged studies as the *Light of Asia*, but in what may be described as occasional verse of a lyric or descriptive kind. The literary reputation

of this author suffers to-day by the inaccessibility of his work. His verse is scattered throughout a variety of volumes produced by different publishers; and one useful task lies to the hand of some enterprising editor who will collate his shorter poems and publish them in a single uniform edition. Much criticism has been exhausted upon the *Light of Asia*; but this brief essay is concerned only with the shorter poems written in India. These are finer than any verse previously noticed; and reveal unusual insight into Indian character and an unusual power of interpretation and description. It is not too much to say that for the first time in the 19th century in India (if Leyden's scanty work be excepted), in Sir Edwin Arnold's verse the true poetic note is sounded with the irresistible appeal attaching to all true poetry. This appeal baffles analysis: but to it the intellect responds without question. Of his poems written in India or concerned with purely Indian subjects some are purely lyrical, others descriptive and narrative. The *Rajput Nurse*, *Basti Singh's Wife*, *The Snake and the Baby* and *The Caliph's Draught* are the best of the short narrative poems, and take their place along with the non-Indian *Potiphar's Wife* and *A Pair of Egyptian Slippers*. Scattered throughout the various poems are many descriptive passages of accurate beauty. One such is the introduction to the *Secret of Death*, written in that smooth running octosyllabic metre that has been an ornament of English poetry from Chaucer to Morris. No lover of the East will fail to appreciate this picture of an Indian temple:—

Sacred and placid was the place,  
With cool, smooth walls, and slender grace  
Of domed roof, and a peepul tree,  
And platform of hewn masonry,  
Whereto the distant city's hum  
Came soft, with broken beats of drum  
Which did not mar the solitude;

For all around that temple cooed  
 The creamy doves ; striped squirrels leaped  
 From stem to stem, the musk-rat peeped  
 Under the wall ; beside the porch  
 Flamed the red lizard like a torch  
 Plung on the rock ; the egrets stretched  
 Their snowy wings ; green parrots fetched  
 Fruit to their young with joyous cries ;  
 The monkey-people's mild brown eyes  
 Glittered from bough and coping-stone ;  
 And—underneath a root—alone,  
 Dwelt a great cobra, thick and black,  
 With ash-grey mottlings on his back,  
 A most prodigious snake—but he  
 Kept the peace, too, religiously,  
 With folded hood, and fangs of death  
 Sheathed, while he drew his slow, cold breath,  
 Coiled in the sun, or lapped the feast  
 Of warm milk poured him by the Priest. 1426.

This is verse of unmistakable quality ; and much of the same kind may be found repeatedly in all the poems of Sir Edwin Arnold that treat of India. His lyrics are of the same high order of technical excellence, and have, original or translated, the recognizable element of pure music. His songs written to native Hindu melodies are of rare beauty, and one at least compels quotation in full : that of the Serpent Charmers where the luring pipes drone and shrill to the swaying of the tempted snake.

Come forth, oh, Snake ! come forth, oh, glittering Snake !  
 Oh shining, silent, deadly Nag ! appear,  
 Dance to the music that we make,  
     This serpent-song, so sweet and clear,  
     Blown on the beaded gourd, so clear,  
         So soft and clear.

Oh, dread Lord Snake ! come forth and spread thy hood,  
 And drink the milk and suck the eggs ; and show  
 Thy tongue ; and own the tune is good :  
     Hear, Maharaj ! How hard we blow !  
     Ah, Maharaj ! For thee we blow ;  
         See how we blow !

Great Uncle Snake ! creep forth and dance to-day !  
 This music is the music snakes love best ;  
 Taste the warm white new milk, and play  
 Standing erect, with fangs at rest,  
 Dancing on end, sharp fangs at rest,  
 Fierce fangs at rest.

Ah, wise Lord Nag ! thou comest !—Fear thou not !  
 We make *salaam* to thee, the Serpent-King,  
 Draw forth thy folds, knot after knot ;  
 Dance, Master ! while we softly sing ;  
 Dance, Serpent ! while we play and sing,  
 We play and sing.

Dance, dreadful King whose kisses strike men dead ;  
 Dance this side, mighty Snake ! the milk is here !  
 Ah, *shabash* pin his angry head !  
 Thou fool ! this nautch shall cost thee dear ;  
 Wrench forth his fangs ! this piping clear  
 It costs thee dear !

In his translations of Indian classical poetry many of which were written long after his career in India had ended, Sir Edwin Arnold combined high scholarship with the true instinct of the poet. The Hymn to Durga in the Queen's Revenge from the Virata Parva of the Mahabharata is a song of beauty and dignity ; but space forbids further comment or quotation. It is not too much to say that, shortly after the middle of the 19th century, in this poet's work, there was achieved, as it were, a summing up of all that had been best in Anglo-Indian literature before that date. Sir Edwin Arnold was moved by the same ideas and aspirations as Sir William Jones, and paid as fine a tribute to the dignity of Eastern classical poetry. His occasional verse, lyrical, descriptive and narrative, is in its combined bulk and value, finer than anything produced *in India* before or after his time.

In narrative and reflective verse on Eastern themes, there is only one writer who may rank near to him. Sir Alfred Lyall, who entered the Bengal Civil Service



in 1855, had other than literary pursuits during a strenuous official career that covered the period of the Mutiny. His verse, slight in quantity, comes hot from the heart of experience, and impresses the reader strangely as the work of one driven, as it were unwillingly, to poetic expression by sheer force of emotional conviction. Poems like *The Old Pindaree*, *Rajpoot Rebels* and the like, are fine commentaries upon that middle period of the British occupation when "the good old days" of crime and chaos were within living memory. *Theology in Extremis*, and the *Land of Regrets* can never quite be separated from the educated Englishman's conception of the East. The last poem gives the most poignant of all the many laments that distinguish the literature of exile—the most poignant because its realisation of the truth is both wise and deep.

Let him cry, as thy blue devils seize him,  
O step-mother, careless as Fate,  
He may strive from thy bonds to release him,  
Thou hast passed him his sentence—Too Late ;  
He has found what a blunder his youth is,  
His prime what a struggle, and yet  
Has to learn of old age what the truth is  
In the Land of Regret.

But such subjects have their limitations, and by harping upon them no poet may hope to appeal beyond a very limited audience. In his finest work, *Siva*, Sir Alfred Lyall has abandoned ephemeral themes, and faced one of the immemorial problems of the world. In this great poem he has looked through and beyond the sensuous imagery of the Hindu temple to the conception of those terrible powers that hold man and rule his destiny. No literature produced in India has sounded a deeper note of understanding than this ; and no other poem has so concentrated the mingled sensations of disgust, mystery and awe that haunt the Western mind

in contact with the tangible symbols of the Hindu faith. The work is unique in the history of Anglo-Indian poetry. It stands alone in its deep wisdom and high seriousness. From the time of its production Anglo-Indian verse essayed lighter and less responsible tasks.

The names of poets that remain to be mentioned are familiar enough. Rudyard Kipling produced his *Departmental Ditties in India*; and for the first time gave evidence of that narrative genius and capacity for handling varied metres which have distinguished his verse written in later years and in other countries. Thomas Frank Bignold's "*Leviora, being the Rhymes of a Successful Competitor*" comes near in date to the early work of Kipling. Of their kind these verses must be recognized as in the very first rank. Scholarship, a fastidious taste and metrical skill combine with the most delicate humour to delight the reader. Bignold created that unexampled quatrain which will do more than potential universities and political agitators to immortalise Eastern Bengal :

Our Church as at present it stands  
Has no congregation, nor steeple ;  
The lands are all low lying lands  
And the people are low lying people.

His command of the 18th century pentameter couplet is remarkable. How adequate, how deliciously reminiscent of the wit of Queen Anne's reign, are his lines recalling that glorious past—

When writers revelled in barbaric gold,  
When each auspicious smile secured a gem  
From merchant's store or rajah's diadem ;  
When 'neath the punkha frill the Court reclined,  
When 'Amlah wrote and judges only signed ;  
Or, lordlier still, beneath a virgin space  
Inscribed their names and hid them to the chase.

His trenchant verses written in 1883 on the controversial Ilbert Bill are scarcely quotable in these days of diffuse

sympathy ; but they serve to show how far altered is the racial point of view of our own time—at least in regard to the audacity of its expression. Aliph Cheem, the pen name of Walter Yeldham, belongs almost to the same period as Bignold, but his work is far different in quality. It has been immensely popular, supplying the Ingoldsby legends of the East to a public that needs to be amused. In the way of light verse there is the work of Captain Kendall, the Dum-Dum of Punch, and of Mr. Symms whose delightfully amusing lines have also enlivened that merry journal. In more serious vein is the work of Mr. C. W. Waddington, and of Colonel Trevor who has put into vigorous ballad measures some of the incomparable annals of Rajasthan.

To talk of living poets is a dangerous business ; and this rambling essay must close with a brief reference to certain works that do not fall readily within the scheme of a review. In spite of the Indian climate and the demands of official life, some portentous things have been done in the name of the Muse. "India, a Descriptive Poem," by H. B. W. Garrick, has in its first canto 137 Spenserian stanzas ; and 99 in its second ! The author stated that his object was to employ the architecture of India to illustrate her history, and he achieved this object in 236 stanzas of the following type :—

These are the only national costumes  
 Bengalce ; for the hybrid dress of those  
 Above the peasantry, freely assumes  
 Our own Britannic articles of clothes ;  
 Our shirt serves them for jacket,—lady's hose  
 Like histrionic "tights" worn, are their trews,  
 And reach up to their loin-cloth from their toes ;  
 Essential, too, are patent-leather shoes,—  
 Wights paramented thus we clepe Bengal Babus.

This work was published in London in 1888 : and may yet attain to some recognition as a text-book in the future

Universities of the East. Less ambitious, but more amusing, is the early poem of "Quiz" called "The Adventures of Qui Hai" which runs through pages of wondrous Hudibrastic metre and relates the adventures of a newly joined officer of the Company. The work is adorned with richly coloured plates of caricature, and must have considerable historical, if not literary, value. Almost of the same kind is "The City of Palaces" published in 1824 by James Atkinson, a surgeon in the service of the Company. His book contains two other poems descriptive of Indian life, Peer Mahmoud and The Three Hunchbacks. All are of considerable extent and are written in the lengthy stanza that Byron used in his longer descriptive poems. There is something of the Byronic cynicism in each, and a delight in crude realism that gives genuine interest to the descriptions of old Calcutta, "The City of Palaces." Both these works are of great length and may have been the patient hobby of years. In this respect they rank with the task set for himself by John Graham Cordery who, in Peshawar, translated the whole of the Iliad into English verse, reserving the Odyssey for his retirement. There is no record of Macaulay having attempted poetical work in India. His biography reveals an astounding wealth of humanistic reading achieved on the voyage to and during residence in Calcutta ; but the East did not stimulate him to imaginative work in poetry. This is also true of Lord Lytton whose term of office from 1876 to 1880 does not seem to have furnished any theme to the many volumes of verse published under the name of Owen Meredith.

In a single brief review it would be impossible to include all the authors who have attempted to amuse the world of Anglo-India throughout more than a century. Only those have been named whose contribution to the general stock has been conspicuous. In the record of their work certain facts of interest may have emerged ;

and these may be suitably summarised by way of conclusion. It must be granted that Anglo-Indian poetry began in a mood of desperate seriousness. Sir William Jones, Dr. John Leyden and Bishop Heber might be justly described as introspective scholars aware of the literary possibilities of India and devoted to the high purposes of the Muse. On only one occasion was this mood broken ; when the Hudibrastic nonsense of the genial "Quiz," whoever he may have been, struck a note of revolt. But this work cannot claim any serious place as literature in the period preceding the arrival of Macaulay in India. As social life developed in the larger cities, poetry served a less serious purpose. It became the medium of wit, satire and agreeable relaxation. Of this type of verse Henry Meredith Parker is indubitably the first and best exponent. His manner and his method have fortunately remained with us ; and his direct successors, as Bignold, Yeldham, Kendall and Symms, have carried on his tradition in a style worthy of their genial and witty predecessor. Just after the middle of the century Sir Edwin Arnold and Sir Alfred Lyall redeemed English poetry as then produced in India, from the commonplace. The first brought the energy of true literary genius to work upon Indian themes ; the second allowed his intimate and lengthy experience of the East to become concentrated in verse of small bulk but of incomparable quality. Both writers have revealed from the Western point of view the poetic possibilities of a land rich in its own classical and vernacular poetry ; and have in one sense explained the range and excellence of the imperial Kipling. The decline of our poetry from the high level attained by these writers need give no cause for alarm. This decline has been marked by the polished wit of Leviora, and by the occasional verse of certain contemporaries who delight the drawing rooms of London.

It may well be asked with whom will rest the laurels of the future? The great forces created and loosened by the brilliant dogmatism of Macaulay and by the philanthropic optimism of Bentinck, are gathering to some startling conclusion. In the realm of art their operation may have amazing results. When the glittering armour of language that Shakespeare wore with such effective grace, is donned by some modern Aryan of comparable capacity, the world will wonder at his feats in the field of letters. Meanwhile let us look back with gratitude upon those who for more than one hundred years of exile have kept alive the fires of English song.

T. O. D. DUNN.

# THE EVACUATION OF ASIA.

BY "BRIT."

*A Letter between Democrats.*

**I**N asking me to write to you about the situation in India, you have unwittingly done me a service, even if you have at the same time imposed a task. You know me for an infrequent writer, but I will confess to you that I have wanted to write about the present state of matters ; have begun letters to the newspapers, articles for the reviews. But I have always found it difficult to decide to whom I should address myself. The Bengali politician ; the leaders of the British community in Bengal ; the British politician ; each and all might question my authority. And from the Government of India or the Secretary of State it is equally impossible for me to claim a hearing. I am not a "representative body," and I claim no mandate or authority from any. And so your desire to read meets and fulfills my ache to write, and if it interests any or all of these personages, or any others, to hear what one democrat, crying in an undemocratic wilderness, has to say to another in the world-centre of popular government, why, they may read my letter and welcome.

Now, a British democrat who has lived for nearly a quarter of a century in India, need not be less a democrat than his friend who has stayed at home. Indeed, he may be more so ; I know at least that you will not challenge my democratic feeling and opinion—their depth or sincerity. You have had your object lessons, and I mine ; the result is identical. I shall have something to say about the attitude of some home democrats to the Indian situation ; I may throw doubt on their democracy, but in

the main I shall merely deplore their lack of information and interest. The democrat in India must hold that the gospel of freedom is for Indians as for the rest of the world, and so he will be in sympathy with every ideal and every movement that leads towards the emancipation of the common man in India from yokes and tyrannies and disabilities. Further, he will not be able to countenance any movement, however high-sounding its name and style, that he believes will tend to delay this emancipation of the common man, or that will rivet heavier chains upon him.

Such a movement is the "Home-Rule-Now" movement; such are the effects which are to be expected by any sane democrat who will study the character of the movement for "provincial autonomy and Indian control."

"We are at the parting of the ways. On the eve of great changes in the constitution of the Government of India. Educated India is filled with that hope. May it be fulfilled." These and such as these are the words of those who call themselves the spokesmen of Educated India. And thus and thus speaks one in the name of Progressive Britain: "The scheme to be acceptable to India must go far in the direction of giving the Indian people a popular voice in their own affairs and free access to place and power. After all we have to face the fact that India belongs to the Indian, and the more courageously we face it the better for the relations of the two countries." Now these are exceeding fine words and they have a convincing sound, if one did not somehow feel that vision as well as courage is necessary when one is face to face with a tangled skein.

It is, of course, popular government that our British progressive professors. But I am afraid it is something rather different that the educated, moneyed, landed Indian wants.—it is not government "*by* the people" he wants; it is government *of* the people, *by* the educated, moneyed and



landed classes *for*—themselves ! It is a House of Lords he wants, but not a House of Commons ; it is oligarchy, hierarchy, plutocracy he aims at, and not democracy. He is in a hurry for autonomy, but his progress in democracy will be slower than ever. Zemindar and mandarin—it is only a difference of a letter, and (looking easterly for an illustration) it is mandarin-rule he wants.

*The Bengalee* says : “ What is to be the test of fitness ? Is it a test in literacy ? Then our reply is that we have a larger percentage of literates than England had at the time of the Reform Bill of 1832.” It may be so ; nothing could sound more sweetly reasonable ; but illiteracy in India is a present-day fact, and India presumably is to start at the Reform Bill of 1832. It is significant that the ingenuous young zemindar who presided at the farewell dinner preceding Mr. Basu’s departure to take up his duties as India’s representative on the India Council in London, should say : “ he will command equally the confidence of many of the *special interests* in India, like the Mahomedans, and the *Zemindars*, whose *cherished hopes, rights and privileges*, he is *fully aware of*, having so many Mahomedan friends and *being a Zemindar himself*. (Applause.) And I am sure therefore that he will safeguard and defend their interests in his new sphere of action equally as the many political rights so dear to our leaders in this country.” The italicized phrase is significant, I think—the cloak of democracy slips at times.

The student of the political history of Great Britain and Ireland does not need to be told that the domination of the landed classes in British politics did not end in 1832, that fourteen years of bitter strife followed and that the powers of the House of Lords are still a live question of democracy. It is one of the curious features of Indian politics that it is to the democracy of Britain that the Bengal landed gentry look for the enlargement and better security of the charter granted them long ago by the British

aristocracy. Possibly the explanation is to be found in the spurious nature of the democracy of India's "friends" in England, but it is hard to find excuses for those real democrats who have been led captive by them. It is interesting to remember that many years ago a prominent Indian leader was reported to have said to a group of young Oxford progressives that if their ideas of progress meant any interference with the permanent settlement of Bengal, then Bengal had no use for those ideas. Possibly these young men were discouraged by Bengal's veto on their ideas—possibly not. But British democracy took little note of the significance of these words, and has long forgotten them.

India will stand, then, if her present politicians come to power, as apparently they will shortly, about a hundred years behind Western democracy. There are those who would estimate the handicap at three hundred years. They say that, if you travel in India, away from the industrial towns, visit the courts of her greater and lesser potentates, you will find the India of Akbar. In the villages and fields the same patient peasants who tilled and sowed and reaped and paid taxes, while armies marched and countermarched, north and south and east and west, and conquerors came and went. And they say, but for the "guiding hand," there would be to-day the same lordly oppression. It may be so; but it is sufficient for our purpose that we know the mind of the present-day politician, and knowing that mind it may well appear to you and me that India would be wise to keep in closest touch with British progress in democracy for a considerable number of years to come.

This leads to the consideration of the tendencies of present-day democracy, and the remarkable and rapid progress of the democratic idea since August 1914. The type of democrat is changing. You have at present—a considerable survival, not to be reckoned negligible—a certain type of demi-democrat who has always been

associated in my mind with a very comfortable padded armchair, drawn close to the side of a cosy fireside. He wears, moreover, woolly and roomy slippers; we need not be so unkind as to suggest that his brain is somewhat like his slippers. We will call him the Old Democrat. I shall not attempt a detailed definition; he is sincere in his desire for reform and progress, clear-sighted enough in matters of domestic policy, but, having but hazy ideas of India and its conditions, he suffers himself to be guided by certain "friends" of India, and for the rest dismisses Indian affairs in a disinterested and light-hearted manner more calculated to promote his own comfortable complacency than to further the best interests of the Indian people. He cannot see that the real British idea of progress and the Indian politician's ambition are poles asunder and you might argue for hours about your idea of the necessary ingredients of democratic advance in India, but it would all be "beside the point" to him. "India for the Indians," and "Self-government is better than good government"—and all is said. He seems to trust that somehow democracy will be the final goal of zemindar-rule. The danger is—and we do not seem to realize how real and how imminent it is—that the future of India is to be settled on the basis of such unqualified axiomatic generalizations as I have quoted.

But there is a new democrat in the making and he views with considerable uneasiness and concern the approach of the time when, as it seems to him, India will be handed over to its retrogressive politicians by a British politician who has never been much interested in India, and has become tired of the blatant outcries of those who seem to represent her, and of the reproach, the undeserved reproach, of repression.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I am sending you a few newspaper cuttings which you will possibly find more in forming and convincing than my letter. Most of these extracts are from one particular journal; you may possibly wish that I had chosen from a wider field, but I can only say that I have read the leading articles of this journal regularly for about a year and have found that daily task sufficiently exhausting without venturing further. I trust I have

The New Indian and the Old Democrat however, are united in firm alliance, and the latter knows so little about the Indian side of the compact that he imagines they pursue the same glorious course and seek the same splendid goal. Those who have tried to instil ideas of real social progress into the political oligarchy of Bengal, and have experienced that sense of hopeless fatigue, of futile knocking at closed doors, that is the chief reward of such efforts, could enlighten him, if he sought light or welcomed it. The record of the attempts to thwart city improvement in Calcutta would astonish western democracy; you know what opposition is, I am aware, but not on our scale.<sup>1</sup> Disillusionment will come to the

not written without due respect for the venerable leader and leader-writer (if, indeed, he does write all those fiery but immature leaders that appear under his name). I have respected him for a sort of sincerity, not always for his wisdom. The sense of humour, of course, he lacks and his economies are - 1832. I sympathise with him in his present troubles with the less moderate Moderates, and shall not be at all surprised to hear that he seeks the seclusion and peace which Rabindranath the poet seems willing to abandon. But he has a uncanny pen when displeased with his Anglo-Indian contemporaries. The first extract—and it might have been written in Armenia: "For some time past, the situation before the country was one that caused serious misgivings to all, having her best interest at heart. The atmosphere was charged with mistrust and suspicion. Dark clouds banked up in the horizon and the signs produced uneasiness and apprehension in the minds of all who could read them aright. All these were the direct outcome of the policy of repression upon which the Government embarked. Despair took hold of the minds of the people, who expressed their keen resentment at the attitude of the Government."

<sup>1</sup> The second extract—a song of rejoicing because the law had decreed that the Improvement Trust could not, under the Act, acquire land for purposes of recoupment: "As we fully expected our Anglo-Indian contemporaries are not pleased with the judgment of the High Court dismissing the appeal of the Calcutta Improvement Trust in connection with the Russa Road scheme. We are waiting for the *Statesman* to launch its thunderbolt, but the *Englishman* has already run full tilt against the decision of the High Court, which is twitted with the contrariety of views displayed in the judgments of Mr. Justice Greaves and the Appellate Bench. The arguments of the Hare Street paper need not be taken seriously; but it makes one characteristic complaint which must be noticed. The result of these conflicting judgments, says our sapient contemporary, will be that 'ordinary human beings will have to wait an unconscionable time for Calcutta to be made a tolerably decent city to live in.' We are charmed with the modesty which prompts the *Englishman* to call himself and his constituents ordinary human beings, but we are amazed at the assurance which assumes that the chief object of the Improvement Trust is to make Calcutta habitable for a certain number of ordinary human beings. Was Calcutta unfit for human habitation before the Trust was created? Besides, if the ordinary human beings represented by the *Englishman* were to shake off the dust of Calcutta from their feet and migrate elsewhere the city would not be plunged

democrat, but it is likely to come too late for India. For British and European and American democracy will presently be full of its own problems, and, the guiding hand having been lifted from India, who will seek to replace it, if it be very difficult, or very dangerous, or very costly.

Let us not imagine that the democratic world cannot get on without India—or without Asia, if need were. Looking at the Europe of 1913, of course, these considerations are not apparent: they are non-existent to the parochial mind, and the New Indian and the Old Democrat are alike in their parochialism. The politician will talk of British interests in India—she has wealth to offer and careers and other fine things. And then on the other hand there is Britain's fatherly care for a creditable and worthy child, whose expressions of gratitude for British blessings, and for the expected crowning mercy of Home Rule, are writ large for the world to read. So the tale will go. But—the worthy child desires to walk alone; spurns the insult of the guiding hand, in spite of all the large writing; esteems itself full grown—almost—and Father Britain is tired, sick of talk, and full of cares. One problem the less; let India have Home Rule; India a self-governing country within the Empire.

Within the Empire, we say. Well, that is going to be, more than it has ever been, a privilege of free peoples; peoples of free institutions, equal rights and enlightened customs, and of a high and broad standard

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in mourning. The *Englishman* and the *Statesman* represent a class of people who have no permanent stake in Calcutta, who own very little house property and who are merely temporary residents of the city. They are not seriously affected by the operations of the Calcutta Improvement Trust and that is why they are such staunch supporters of that body." The third extract—like the first cutting, this is also about the Improvement Trust: "Now, the community represented by the *Statesman* is very little affected by the Trust since Anglo-Indians, whether merchants or officials, have very little house property of their own and live mostly in rented houses. What, then, is the interest of these papers in the work of the Trust? Far too long has the Improvement Trust been allowed to do things at its own sweet will and in its own way unchallenged and uncriticised. Its work must now be brought under the fierce light of public opinion."

of life. In the words of the Prime Minister, recently reported: "Unity of action was not the suppression of freedom, but its highest expression" . . . "To-day they were one in purpose, action, hope, resolve, and sacrifice." . . . "When the war was over humanity would recognise how much human liberty owed to the fact that the British Empire was no sham, but a reality." A fine thing it is to belong to such an Empire, "one in purpose and action." It means, in my mind, not only the freedom *of* all the parts of the Empire, but freedom *in* all. Forbid that human liberty in India should be betrayed in the name of Liberty. There are to be considered the rights of man as well as the rights of nations.

Great is the ideal of Empire, an Empire of liberty-loving peoples and governments; a strength to its own people, a menace to no other people, a refuge and safeguard to smaller peoples. There is something greater coming, and even our Empire-builders, our loudest singers of wave-ruling ditties, are conscious of something that is to include without eclipsing that empire on which the sun never sets, and on which even the moon and the stars shed a bright particular ray. The stars in their courses are fighting, we begin to think, for this greater thing. Can we not see the growth in the west of a great confederacy of free peoples? America is in it, and free Russia after much tribulation will achieve an entrance. The bonds that unite Britain and France and Italy are not mere sentiment, of the texture of a scrap of paper.

The free peoples are grappling with the last of the Conquistadors in Europe and the end is no longer in doubt. And just as in the western hemisphere the South American Republics are following the lead of the United States, so in Europe the peoples, as the menace of Prussianism declines, are one by one drawn to the nations who have professed a sound doctrine of free national development. It has been said that in five years from the end of the war,

the Germans will be the most democratic people in Europe ; and if we look far enough ahead we can see a chastened and democratic Germany and Austria, and on a smaller scale a disillusioned Bulgaria, seeking progress and peace with their neighbours. Autocracy, doubtless, dies hard, and harder dies plutocracy even in the more free communities, but the enfeebling pulse is unmistakable.

We find no signs of insight into these things in the public prints and published speeches of the Indian politician. "Free national development," indeed, is one of his cherished watchwords—it is also a battle-cry of the Hohenzollern, and the treacheries of Constantine were perpetrated in its name, until the Allies in the name, shall we say, of the integrity of Europe interposed a guiding hand, much to the gain of the Greek people. The pathetic idealists of Russia in the name of free national development would place their beloved land under the Hohenzollern heel. Thus tyrants and idealists conspire together to retard progress—and still, in spite of all high-sounding phrases, it simply is not true that all peoples, at all times, have a right to manage or mis-manage all their affairs. Self-government should be the goal of all peoples, and those who lack it, should seek it along the roads of enlightenment and progress, like good pilgrims putting aside every weight, avoiding all pitfalls and false paths.

The New Democrat, it must be remembered, is at present in the trenches, struggling for that basic security on which alone his institutions can be built. Why not wait, then, till he comes back to the ordered ways of life—why embark on speculations as to what he will think and do? One would be content to wait, indeed, for the New Democrat if the Old would wait. But one feels that he is rushing things, especially Indian things ; or he is being rushed. And so let us proceed with our investigation of currents and tendencies.

The New Democrat will begin with a very thorough suspicion of superior persons, supermen, potentates and prelates. Cultural and spiritual ascendancies will alike be discounted. Kings and collegians, bishops and brahmins, margraves and mandarins ; their claims will be scrutinized. That particular obsession, so dear to the hearts of old ladies and long-haired poets, and held indeed with an arrogance quite Prussian by the Bengali politician,<sup>3</sup> that the East is the peculiar home of spiritual insight and wisdom, will be of little account to him. He will be profanely and profoundly heedless when occult personages mingle the theology of the sophists with the sophistries of the theologians, taking heed only when their sophistries impinge on the political sphere. There is, if I may coin a phrase, a naive effrontery about these spiritual pretensions, especially in the mouths of our indigenous journalists, that could only receive justice from the pen of a Meredith. "Comedy he pronounces to be our means of reading swiftly and comprehensively. She it is who proposes the correcting of pretentiousness, of inflation, of dullness, and

The fourth extract : "India's mission is to distribute the nectar of spirituality to the thirsty nations of the world, some of whom have already come to realise the imperfection of their own civilisation." . . . "All the most ancient nations of the world have been swept away from the face of the earth : but India, the most ancient of all countries, has survived the persecution of ages with her intense spirituality still burning within her ; and the time is fast approaching when she will stamp her genius upon the future history of humanity, only if we the sons of India are true to ourselves and our sacred motherland." The fifth extract : "We want to rise to the full height of our manhood, so that we may help ourselves and advance the progress of humanity. It is this double object, national and humanitarian, that is the inspiring impulse of this great movement. God gave us great gifts. In the morning of the world we were the teachers of mankind. Before Rome had been built and Babylon and Nineveh had emerged into the historic arena, we preached those moral and spiritual truths which have stood the test of time and the war of jarring creeds. That was our role in the past. God grant that it may be our high function in the future. Expectant humanity awaits the lessons that India has yet to teach, the great truths that will flow from the inspired lips of the *Rishis* of the future. A new chapter of the Vedas has yet to be revealed for the guidance of Humanity in the future ; and the revelation will come from the sacred banks of the Ganges. It may be that the light will first strike the turrets of the Hindu University at Benares and illumine the world. But for the attainment of the great future that awaits us, political freedom is the first condition. We must emancipate ourselves, with the aid and guidance of England before we can emancipate humanity and tear away the fetters of gross materialism which have clogged its growth."



of the vestiges of rawness and grossness to be found among us. She is the ultimate civilizer, the polisher.

. . . She watches over sentimentalism with a birch rod." And comedy it is, but with tragedy in the last act. The world has need of a deeper spirituality, and it is little matter where it comes from, if it comes to our need. Neither this mountain, nor Jerusalem—some lowly Nazareth perhaps, repeating history, will send us a prophet. That is the world's need ; some of us individually have the most urgent need of a humble and contrite heart.

The New Democrat, to continue, is neither woolly-brained nor mealy-mouthed. The league of nations, if it comes at all will come as a confederacy of free peoples, and will not, cannot, include nations who have not attained a certain measure of social freedom. Germany is being told these things with no uncertain voice, and Home-Rule India will have to listen to the same clear call—some day. To descend from generalization to the study of particular tendencies ; the New Democracy is devoting itself to the study of problems of industrial organization and control, of agriculture and the land, of the standard of life, and the conditional factors of physical and mental efficiency, of public health and the conservation of the life of the common man. "Man-power" as a watch-word will survive the declaration of peace. In a war which has beggared all former wars, the "plain man-at-arms" in spite of machinery, and the plain man in the production of machinery, have counted for so much that they are to come into their own in that era of peace which we are striving to establish.

It would be well to remember, too, that, having established some workable system of boundaries in Europe and Africa, the league, democratic and above all peaceable, having, as it will firmly believe, done with all conquistadors and supermen, will be very impatient with the instigators

of petty national disputes. There are some national boundaries in Europe which are incapable of geographical definition,<sup>1</sup> but with the growth of good government and the absence of dynastic oppression and lordly extortion in all the confederate countries, the New Democracy will incline to be rather overbearing with any group of a few thousands that would start a sentimental clamour for union with their brethren across some frontier. The larger brotherhood of the league would have to serve.

Let us consider how these developments are to bear on India and Asia. When Allied Democracy, having deposed Constantine, is in effect asking for the deposition of the Hohenzollern, can it be said that the affairs of any country are altogether the affair of that country alone? If India, therefore, is to keep in touch with the progress of the world, are we not wise to demand some fuller and more accurate index to the situation than the simple phrase "India for the Indians?" We cannot afford to play with phrases; this is a vital matter for India, the question of its future relations with the powers of progress. It will not be enough, for instance, to make demands in the interests of Indian immigrants—Democracy, with its care for the standard of life, will have its demands to put forward. The question is economic. The availability of cheap labour will be looked upon as something less than a boon by nations that have learned the lesson of "man-power." The "minimum wage" has come into the sphere of practical politics, and presently our statesmen will discover its potentialities in, and its bearing on, immigration matters. India, self-governed, will somehow seem to have less claim to special treatment, its emigrants will have to conform to the general standards, and compete

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<sup>1</sup> "The principle of Nationality is not a talisman which will open all gates, for in some parts of Europe the different races are so inextricably intermingled as to defy all efforts to create ethnographic boundaries."—R. W. Seton-Watson in "The War and Democracy."

on higher levels. That is but one direction out of many in which demands will be made if India is to seek an equal place amongst the self-governing nations within the Empire.

It is almost impossible to forecast the nature of the "step" which is about to be taken. A perusal of the Gokhale scheme, the Sydenham proposals, the resolution of the nineteen, the Congress scheme and the "Colonial government within the Empire" idea, leaves us bewildered. We can only fall back on our own estimate of these demands (based on all these and on the public utterances of the more moderate of the Moderates). Over against this we put what we know of the attitude of the Home government, and we come to the conclusion that British statesmanship is committing itself at least to the early concession of provincial Indian control, with provincial autonomy. The line is to be crossed.

When one envisages the place and power that Indians now hold in supreme, and local, and municipal councils, one must realize that any step forward—if it be a step at all shifts the balance of power. I am not sure, with all the talk that goes on, with the use of such vague terms as "appreciable advance towards self-government," "further steps," and so on, that we realize that at a certain point in our gradual advance we are bound to cross a line where "British control" ceases to be effective. The politicians ask no less than this cessation. Even if "the official majority" continues to exist in the supreme council, it seems certain that it has reached the vanishing point in the local councils. "India for the Indians"—Bengal, at least, and soon, for the Bengalis.

India seeks, if her spokesmen are to be believed, to enter the wicket gate burdened by much that, from the point of view of those who have absorbed the ideas and customs of the more advanced and enlightened nations of the earth, will render her national development a

precarious process. She should seek to develop the spirit of her democracy first, to educate her people, to elevate those who are depressed, to abolish amongst all classes and sections evil customs and obsolete disabilities and oppressions. There are whole regions of action in which the patriotic Indian can work now for progress and enlightenment unhindered by "bureaucrats" or any other bugbears. It is just in those regions that the indigenous politician has failed, and his future failures will become fatal, when there is no bureaucrat to point the way or to save the situation. The common man, in India, looks in vain and, it seems likely, will continue to look in vain to his "leaders" for deliverance from such special burdens as marriage dowries, priestly dues, the widow's misery, child-marriage, and the more universal burdens of insanitary surroundings and evil civic conditions.

I speak, as I have told you, without mandate or authority, and I address no one but yourself, a fellow democrat. In one quarter, at least, there will be no ear for anything I may say; it has been decreed that a colour-bar should exclude me. Our local, indigenous Thunderer has said: "But why should Europeans, who have no permanent stake in the country, and are mere birds of passage, concern themselves so much in a matter which vitally affects the political future of the country and its people, and is between themselves and the supreme authority in England." You and I know, of course, that the supreme authority in Britain is the people of Britain; I think the politician sometimes forgets that—when it suits him—although his appeal to the democracy is vocal enough at other times. But we poor exiles, voteless, politically powerless, are no part of that "large-hearted democracy"—are not "concerned" either with the political progress of India or of Britain. "India for the Indians;" "Britain for the British;" for the Briton in India—what? Our indigenous journalist says that if we "were to shake off the

dust of Calcutta from our feet and migrate elsewhere the city would not be plunged in mourning." (See Note 2.) Apposite to this, of course, is the remark of a man I met in Chowringhee the other evening: "We'll be jolly glad when we get out of it." Jolly good riddance—Jolly glad to go. Shade of Mark Tapley—what a jolly situation !

So we come now by a sort of natural progression to a consideration of the position of the Briton in India ; still speaking, not as "representative bodies," but as one democrat to another. I am afraid this is not quite what you expected me to write about, but I wish to impress on you that there are communities in India that have claims on the British Parliament, even if they have no votes.

There is a community here in Bengal ; a considerable community ; a loyal and a patriotic community, an energetic and a trustworthy community. Much sought after for positions of trust, valued for their initiative, the members of this community are to be found at the head of various affairs. Alien to Bengal they are, doubtless, but no more alien than the Marwari or the Parsec in the things that matter politically, and far more useful to the general community of the province. Not reckoned a warlike community, they have yet responded to the call of the great struggle in such manner as no other community in India—not Sikhs nor Gurkhas, Garhwals nor Punjabees—can hope to bear comparison with. Go about amongst their depleted ranks—almost every man has relatives in the trenches, almost every man mourns his dead in the war. They deserve mention—the British.

Where does this British community stand, in this momentous time of stepping forward, of launching out into experiments in government ? What, in particular, is the attitude of the non-official, the merchant and trader, the planter and the captain of industry ? It would be interesting to speculate on the inner thoughts of those

servants of India, who say so little and do so much—the rank and file of the I. C. S.—but that is not my present concern. There is another important community which has a strong claim, not only on the Government of India, but on the Home Government, for just treatment and sympathetic consideration, but the relation of the Anglo-Indian to the Home Rule controversy, and his possible position in a self-governed India, are questions large and grave enough for special treatment, although in great measure his interests are identical with those of the European. He has his own institutions and his own representatives, however, and I do not propose to speak of him now.

I am concerned now with the seven or eight thousand male British subjects with their dependents who come into the non-official categories in Bengal, and with their claims for justice and sympathy. These are the “exploiters,” I suppose, so obnoxious to ignorant critics, but it is a sad and solemn fact that you could buy up the exploitation prospects of most of them with a very ordinary annuity. You see there are railway guards and engine drivers as well as merchant princes, and there is a middle class here amongst them as hardly driven as, and much more heavily rented than, their fellows with you. This is the community whose problems an observant clergyman, in the *Times*,<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The Rev. Oswald Younghasband writes to the *Times*:—The rally of the great Dominions round the Old Country at this crisis of Empire is surely because England cared for them when they were weak. Having spent the last eight years of my life amongst Englishmen who have made India their domicile, and knowing that they are in a weak position to-day, I venture to urge that they and their problems should receive serious study to-day. If people in England do not take an interest in them, and if they do not take an interest in themselves, I think we may find a discontented body of Englishmen in India, strongly disliking those changes which are coming over India, though with no power to alter them. If, on the other hand, people in England take an interest in them, and if they take an interest in themselves, I hope we shall find a body of public-spirited men of increasing value in the development of India. I would plead, in the first place, for greater interest. I was talking the other day to a man who had been sent out by the Home Government to study problems in India. He had stayed at most of the Government houses in India, he had received introductions to leading Indians, and had discussed with them many problems in India.

urges you to study seriously. I can bear witness to the truth of his words when he speaks of the lack of interest in this community which is the common characteristic of various investigators who have visited us recently ; I have had a hurried hour with two of them.

Well, the community is British, and that tells much to the discerning. For example—this for the benefit of the non-discerning—they are not anxious, and they are not prepared. There is no need for them to be anxious, and it would be a mistake to imagine that their unpreparedness implies helplessness in any extreme degree. But it might be imagined by an uninitiated observer that this important community is quite indifferent to the changes that are in the air ; they seem hardly aware that India is about to step over the line, that the balance of power is shifting. Is it that they have become so inured to the whips of British officialism (to which one zemindar has always been more than ninety-and-nine just persons who only pay rent) that they cannot see the scorpions with which that same zemindar hopes presently to stand over them ?

The appeal of His Excellency the Viceroy for calmness and quiet thinking at the present time has not fallen on deaf ears, so far as this community is concerned. It is indeed a time for quiet thinking and balanced judgment. The time is approaching, however, when, with minds made

I asked him whether in the course of his travels in different parts of India anybody had ever suggested his studying the problems of his own countrymen domiciled in India. He told me that nobody had ever suggested such a thing, and he knew nothing whatever about them. But after we had talked the matter well over together, he told me that he thought that there were no problems in India more important than those of the Englishman domiciled in India. Scattered as such Englishmen are in comparatively small numbers over a vast country like India, and forming altogether but a thousandth part of the total population, it is difficult for them to organize themselves effectively. But a serious effort is now being made in this direction, not for the purpose of thwarting Indian aspirations, but for the public-spirited object of enabling their own community to play a stronger part in the life of the Empire. It would be of encouragement to these public-spirited men who are working amid many difficulties if Englishmen who go out to study the problems of India would make it their business to be brought into touch with them, and learn from them what their problems are,

up, the results of their thinking must be put forward in definite and unmistakable phrase. The community, one observes, is looking to the European Association not only for leading, but for action. I am not in the inner councils, but I believe the Association is not standing idly by, while the great change takes place; it will be ready with its views and opinions at the proper season, and one cannot doubt that its manifesto when it appears, will give evidence of that calm and balanced judgment which His Excellency the Viceroy desires, and expects. The representative character of the Association is admitted, but in order to strengthen this there are two things that are desirable: (1) On the part of the community, that a large majority should belong to the Association. There should be seven or eight thousand members in Bengal, but I do not think there are so many. (2) On the part of the Association, that it should call for a general expression of opinion from its members.

It is essential to a general understanding of the position of the British community in Bengal, that its relations to the rest of the community should be clear. The British, although alien to India in the exact sense of the word, have always looked upon themselves as fellow citizens; the Imperial idea has helped them to that, and if they have found that divergent customs, peculiar to India and not to be encountered in any other part of the Empire, have prevented closer relations they, admitting faults of their own, must not be altogether blamed. One is thankful that there is so much mutual understanding and respect, enduring friendship and co-operation, but one fears that with the politician even the most democratic Briton makes little progress. The reasons for this are various, but the extracts I have enclosed (see Note 2) from a leading Bengalee paper of recent date, will illuminate for you the attitude of the politician. The "permanent stake" and "bird of passage"



are old taunts, but not outworn ; they are current coin to the politician, and it would be useless to call them time-worn. And they splash and spot the careful democratic colouring of Mr. Basu's recent valedictory utterances—thus does one patriot discount the words of another. Making all allowance for the little display of temper, prompted by the prickly paragraphs of contemporaries, touches like these should interest non-official British exiles, should awaken them to the possibilities of their position in a Bengal self-governed. They have "salted Bengal with their bones," have built Calcutta, and have spent on an average a quarter of a century, the best years of their lives, to acquire no stake in the country, but to make the fortunes of so many of that "special class" the zemindars. "Why should they concern themselves?" The British community are told in resounding phrase to mind their own business ; being British they will mind it, but they will also try to secure that it is respected and justly dealt by. As a democrat you will recognise an old enemy in that "permanent stake."

There never was a day in which prophets were held in less honour, and therefore it behoves us to disclaim all prophetic inspiration. But it is permissible, if one have the rudiments of vision, to speculate on the things that may happen in the light of the things that are happening and have happened, and by a close study of the tendencies of the time, the currents of thought and opinion, to arrive at a more or less reliable estimate of the possibilities

The sixth extract with reference to steps taken by the India Office to promote the permanent revival of the Behar Indigo industry by the appointment of a standing committee to encourage research : "We in India have had no information on this subject so far. May we ask whom are the labours of the expert and the committee likely to benefit? Are not the indigo planters of Behar chiefly Europeans? There are many wealthy Indian zemindars in Behar. The Maharaja of Durbhanga is the wealthiest landowner in India. Is indigo cultivation carried on on a large scale on his lands? We wish some member of the Behar Legislative Council would put a question calling for a return giving the names of all the indigo planters in Behar, the area of land under indigo cultivation, the average earnings of indigo cultivators and the names of the zemindars. We would then be in a position to judge where the bulk of the profits goes."

of the future. Nothing more and nothing less is my aim. I claim no inspiration, but merely the habits of observation, speculation and deduction. I am no alarmist, but there is nothing sensational in asking that not only facts, but possibilities, should be faced with "courage" and *vision*. Belonging to the European community, and acutely conscious of the bearing of present political movements on that community, having had good reason in the past to trust my own vision in matters affecting it, I merely claim the right to speculate on its future. I believe that when the time comes to ask for guarantees and safeguards, the community will make its voice heard.

The chief point that will have to be borne in mind by the British community, when, as the representatives of British Trade and Industry, they ask for guarantees and safeguards, is the essentially backward state of Bengali political opinion on questions of land tenure, and its exaggerated sense of the importance of the landlord's position. It would be a thousand pities to return to the unsatisfactory state of affairs of John Company's time although one sometimes wonders by what process the landed rights, such as they were, which the British Government took over from the Company, have been so largely disposed of—but some kind of protection in regard to land tenures and tenants' rights must be provided; if there is to be surrender there must be terms, and the time for these is the time of the "next step."

We are not dealing with the question of the conservation of the Empire's military and naval position in Eastern seas, but the hope may be expressed here that certain points, such as Aden, Ceylon, and Singapore will not pass out of Imperial control. Further, in the interests of the peace of Asia, so long as Britain continues to be concerned with it, it is necessary that certain other points in India itself shall be held as Imperial outposts, the land involved being held as Imperial land: Bombay

harbour and forts with an adequate and scientific circumvallation in the Western Ghats; a few other places in Madras and South India, such as, for example, Vizagapatam; and in Bengal, besides Fort William and its Maidan, a few square miles at Diamond Harbour. Who knows, in some future pacification of the Peninsula, the Western Ghats may be the Torres Vedras of a new Wellington, and Diamond Harbour an equally important riverine base. That autonomous India may be acquisitive is evident from the last clause in the late Mr. Gokhale's manifesto (that manifesto which our local autonomists repudiate for its weakness): "German East Africa, if conquered from the Germans, should be reserved for Indian colonization and should be *handed over to the Government of India.*" This little gleam of revelation should put Britain on its guard, not only with reference to Africa, but also the Persian Gulf, Aden, Ceylon and Singapore.

One is tempted to speculate here on the general situation in Asia, and the future relations of India to the great and homogeneous nations to the north-east; that would be an interesting and exciting speculation. There are China and Japan; there are, if we cast our thoughts forward, possibilities in the drawing together of the Mahomedan peoples of Arabia, Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Central Asia. The changes of the last ten years, the immense upheaval of ideas and institutions, accelerated by the war, should prepare our minds for further changes. "Incredible" things have happened—will happen.

If we examine the various manifestoes of Indian aspiration, we cannot doubt that Home-Rule India would soon purge herself of British interests, and it would follow in the natural order of things that she would have a vastly modified claim on British statesmanship. There may seem an element of absurdity in working out these matters to logical conclusions, but the absurdity is not mine. Powers

of negotiation and treaty, an Indian Navy and Army—and the “drain” of the British Army abolished—are not these amongst their cherished dreams? Assume, if you like, that self-guided India free of British control and interest, will be left alone for a time by the rest of Asia to work out her salvation on the lines of her politicians’ ideals. But the further we proceed along this line of reasoning, the nearer we come to something which is at present perhaps only the desire of an extreme section of Indian politicians, but which will, by the pressure of economic and other causes, become equally desired of those British subjects who might, in other circumstances, have constituted a British community in India. Putting aside all poetic and sentimental glosses, the “Call of the East” to the average Briton is economic. We have written of the shifting of the political control; there is likely to be a shifting of the economic balance, and with the rise of administrative and economic opportunity in Europe and Africa, both the recruitment of the I. C. S. and of the European commercial and industrial communities in India, will assume a greatly changed aspect.

We shall not speculate—interesting and exciting as it would be—on the number of young Britons of our “educated classes” who will elect to find their career in the service of a government committed among other things to the ideas of pay and pension which have more than once been foreshadowed in political writings. But the British non-official, “minding,” be it noted, “his own business,” not concerned “in a matter which vitally affects the political future of the country and its people,” concerned only with the economic aspect of his trade and industry in India, will be sensitive to any set of conditions which affects the success of his business, and particularly sensitive to risks and uncertainties. The present “British control” in India, susceptible as it is to some indigenous influences that are inimical to commercial well-being, has an

element of certainty and fairness that will be lacking when that control becomes ineffective. And the British politician's interest in Indian affairs, never very great, will grow beautifully less as British interests decrease. The democracy of Britain, when the British in India have, "unmourned" by India's new governors, "shaken the dust of India from their feet," will not be disposed to seek trouble and to endure sacrifices to safeguard the ungrateful rulers of a distant country. And if self-governed India, as some have predicted, becomes the arena of dynastic ambitions within or without—the Balkans of Asia—the response to cries for help might be: You asked for self-government. You have it. You boasted of ancient dynasties. Settle with them. You hailed our departure. Do without us.

This is the final picture then, that is thrown on the screen, for I refuse to carry speculation further. Japan leagued with the democratic nations; a non-annexationist Russia holding only Siberia; Britain, France, and Portugal—the closest of the Allies—retiring from India; America casting loose from the Philippines, Holland from Java. China and India and Mahomedan South-West Asia left to work out their own salvation. The evacuation of Asia!

BRIT.

*September 10, 1917.*

*Postscriptum.*—While my letter is waiting for the infrequent mail of war-time, events are marching; rather, I should say, opinion is crystallizing. Like a good deed in a naughty world shines the letter of a "Non-political Bengali" in the *Statesman*. No "alien" would dare to mark down the politician as he has done. "Why do you think, my misguided countrymen, that these people, who cannot co-operate with one another in running a bank, or starting a mill, will yet be able to rule the Empire?" . . . "there are some foolish English statesmen who do believe them to some extent."

And the European community, in a splendid meeting in Calcutta, have spoken their mind, and an eminently reasonable and sane mind it is. The effects of that meeting are already apparent, and the "common man" of Bengal, referred to by one of the speakers, is pondering deeply the question "Who are my friends?" Another speaker pointed out that the Indian representation on Legislative Councils to-day "consists of landlords, lawyers, and money-lenders," and he went on to say: "Now curiously enough the millions of India are cultivators; they are not on good terms with their landlords or money-lenders; and the extraordinary proposal which the British people are being asked to approve of is that the millions of India shall be handed over to these landlord conventions to be treated according to their tender mercies."

I think I must end on a more hopeful note than I began. Meredith's imps of the Comic Spirit are watching the Egoists of Indian-Home-Rule-Now. "The sight, however, is one to make our squatting imps in circle grow restless on their haunches, as they bend eyes instantly, ears at full cock, for the commencement of the comic drama of the suicide." I have painted for you a picture of the possibilities that lie along one line of advance. Another time I might, your complaisant acceptance assumed, depict for you the march of events, as they might ensue along another line: India seeking diligently the true line of advance—self-government the intermediate goal of progress in the first instance and not, as the politicians now assert, its initial condition. Mayhap a New Politician and a New Policy may appear one of these days in India.

B.

*September 27, 1917.*

# BENGALI BUDDHIST LITERATURE.

BY MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA HARAPRASAD  
SASTRI, C. I. E.

**T**HE discovery of a Bengali Buddhist Literature is an event of some importance in Literary History. The interest of the discovery is enhanced by the fact that the Literature is one thousand years or more old and that it may lead to a further discovery of a more ancient Literature of the same kind. It is a matter of congratulation that the Bengali which 60 to 70 years ago was regarded as a new language incapable of expressing educated thought and as having no Literature worth the name should prove to be as ancient as Canon Bede and the *Saxon Chronicles*, and it is still more a matter of congratulation that this literature should be found influencing the religious thought of Tibet and through it that of the greater portion of Northern, Central and Eastern Asia. The authors of this literature are still regarded as wise men in these countries and are worshipped as saints and holy men.

The History of the search of Bengali Literature which has led to such excellent results, may be told here with profit and, as it is not long, it may not prove tiresome. In the year 1879 appeared for the first time a history of Bengali Literature, written by an educated Pandit, whose great admiration for Sanskrit Literature did not stand in the way of his appreciating what was then regarded as a lower form of Literature in the vernaculars. Pandit Ramgali Nyayaratna did not go deep in the old history but he did a great service by criticizing the few old works that were known and showing from his own point of view that modern Bengali was deteriorating by falling off from the Sanskritized Standard set up by his immediate

predecessors, the Pandits of the Sanskrit College and specially Pandit Iswara Chandra Vidyasagara criticized with severity the style and idiom of Michael Madhusudan Datta and Babu Bankim Chandra Chatterji and others who tried to infuse a modern spirit in the language and its literature. His work did another service, it roused an enthusiasm for the literature and a number of earnest men began to study and enquire into its history. The first and most powerful of these was Mr. R. C. Datta whose work in English is still read with interest by all Europeans who want to know anything about Bengal. Others followed in the wake both in Bengali and in English and in 1891 appeared a small pamphlet entitled "Vernacular Literature of Bengal Before the Introduction of English Education" in which the author tried to give an exhaustive account of the old literature. He had exceptional opportunities of knowing all that was printed and published up to the year of the publication of the pamphlet covering the period under his review.

He, therefore, concentrated his attention to new works and new facts not treated of by his illustrious predecessors. Yet he brought to light the names of more than one hundred poets of the 16th century and gave much interesting information about them. His object was not to write a history but to draw the attention of educated public to the almost inexhaustible resources of the old Bengali Literature. It became known from his pamphlet that three years before the birth of Chaitanya, Gunarāj Khan finished after ten years of labour a Bengali versified translation of the Skandas of Srimadbhagavata relating to the incarnation of Krishna. Chaitanya is said by all his biographers to have a great liking for three poets, Jayadeva, Vidyāpati and Chandīdāsa. Of these Jayadeva flourished in the 12th century A. D. and wrote his inimitable songs in Sanskrit on the sports of Krishna and Rādhā. But the songs were written in such easy



Sanskrit and the idioms are so near Bengali that people of Bengal, especially those who had any pretensions to education, found little difficulty in understanding and appreciating them.

Vidyāpati was a Maithil Brahman belonging to the last half of the 14th and the first half of the 15th century. His date has been fixed in a very curious way. Shortly after, it is supposed of the defeat and death of Sivasinha, his great patron, who for many years defied the Muhammadan power, he retired with his patron's family in the jungles and employed two scribes to hastily copy a commentary of the well-known rhetorical work entitled *Kāvyaprakāśa*. The manuscripts in two different hands has been found in Nepal and it is dated 291 La Sam, *i.e.*, the era started by the Laksmāna Sena, king of Bengal in 1119 A. D. As the years in that era are calculated in 360 days, the difference between La Sam date and a date in A. D. becomes one year more in 73 years. Calculating that way La Sam, 291 would be  $1119 + 291 - 4 = 1406$  A. D. Vidyāpati lived to a great age. In his early years he wrote in Maithil and in his later years in Sanskrit. Vidyāpati was therefore a middle aged man when he got this manuscript copied.

Vidyāpati, it is said, was anxious to see Chandidās whose fame as a Vaisnava poet was spread far and wide in the Vaisnava world of the time and started from home towards Nannur in Birbhum where Chandidās lived. But they met on the way and were delighted to see each other. Chandidās is regarded as an elder contemporary of Vidyāpati so he must have flourished about the same time, only a little earlier. But we get two different idioms in Chandidās's works. His songs are written in one idiom and his Krishna Kirtan in another idiom. The question of this difference of idioms has not yet been studied but there can be only two explanations. One that the songs have been modernized by those who sing them and that

the epic which has been recently discovered in an old script has not yet undergone the process of Modernization. The other explanation is that there were two Chandidāsas, one older and the other younger. Whichever explanation is found correct in the long run it would not be very wrong if Krishna Kirtan is placed in the middle of the 14th century and thus if the beginning of the Vaisnab literature in Bengali be placed about that time.

Some may object to drag Vidyāpati in the history of Bengali Literature as he was a Maithil Brahman and his language and idiom was Maithil. But it is certain that Mithilā was an integral part of the Kingdom of the Senas of Bengal in the 12th century and that the Maithil Society, Maithil Language, Maithil Script, and Maithil Literature, both Sanskrit and vernacular, were greatly influenced by their intimate contact with Bengal. Harisimha was the king of Maithila in the first quarter of the 14th century. He invaded Nepal and fought with the forces of the Emperors of Delhi. He had a court poet named Jyotirīśvara Kavisekharācārya who wrote both in Sanskrit and Vernacular. One of his Sanskrit works, a drama entitled *Dhūrttusanāgama*, the Meeting with a Knave, in order to give a reception to the victorious Rājā on his successful encounter with the Muhammadans. His Vernacular work is entitled *The Varṇana Ratnākara*, the Ocean of description. It is written in a sort of prose. It gives directions to intending poets how to describe men and things. The language in which it is written can scarcely be distinguished from Bengali, in fact, it is more Bengali than Maithil. It is a store house of information and its known date enhances the value of the information given.

In the year 1883, Babu Jogendra Nath Bose, the proprietor of the *Bengalabāsi* newspaper, published a work entitled *Dharma Mangal*, written about the year 1710, by Ghanarām. It is written for the glorification of the

Dharma Cult, a Cult which is now regarded in many quarters as the last remnant of Buddhism in Bengal. Subsequent researches have brought to light a number of works of the Cult and a number of facts to prove that it is the survival of Buddhism. Ramāi Pandit is regarded as the Originator of the Cult or at least the Cult is indebted for its spread to him. A ballad ascribed to him complains of hardship, which the followers of Buddhism or Sadharma (a word meaning Buddhism in Asoka inscriptions in a number of Buddhist works and in the ballad also) suffered at the hands of Brahmans. They appealed to Dharma-rāja, their god, who is the Second Member of the Buddhist triad, namely, Dharma which in later Buddhism meant the Stupa. He assumed the form of a Musalman with a black cap on his head. His associates such as Siva and Visnu, Durga and others, assumed the forms of Musalman saints. Siva became Adam and Durga became Eve and so they assailed the Brahmans and broke their power. The passage is a significant one. It shows how the Buddhists and Musalmans united against the Brahmans and how Muhammadans absorbed a good deal of the Buddhist population in Bengal. The story given in the Dharma Mangal goes back to the time of the rise of the Pālas in Bengal. But the originator of the Cult by his own admission seems to have flourished after the Musalman conquest of Bengal, how long after, cannot be said. The scene of the ballad is laid at Jājipore and Maldaha, but these are not the well-known cities which go by these names, but obscure places in Western Bengal. Under these circumstances the ballad may well be placed in the second century of the Musalman conquest. The Sunyāpurāna by the same Ramāi Pandit must come to the same age as this curious ballad. Thus neither the literature of Dharma cult nor of the Krishna cult, in Bengali can go beyond the second century of the Muhammadan conquest, *i.e.*, the 14th century A. D.

Our knowledge of the antiquity of the Bengali Literature remained at this stage for many years. In the meanwhile Babu Nagendra Nath Vasu wrote his memorable article on Bengali Literature in the *Visvakoṣa* or, the Bengali encyclopædia and Dinesa Chandra Sen, Ray Saheb, wrote his work entitled *Baṅgālī Bhāsa* and *Baṅgālī Sahitya* in 1896 and translated it into English under the distinguished patronage of the Calcutta University in 1913. These works simply systematizes the information from the time of the *Sūnyapurāṇa* downwards and presented it in a readable form. In their anxiety to give a complete account of the works in these centuries they had no time to work out the details of any special period of literary activity or any special form of literature. Many enthusiastic young men are now engaged filling in the gaps left open by them. Of these Babu Susil Kumar De is doing a special service by working out details of the Bengali Literature of the early years of British rule, when British officers and Missionary gentlemen took great interest in Bengali, wrote books, pamphlets, papers and articles and even conducted newspapers, thus laying the foundation of that Bengali prose, which is so much admired at the present moment. These established foundries for Bengali type, taught the Bengali compositors their work and made the beginning of the Bengali Press which is so active at the present day and which gives occupation to so many thousands of men. The merit of Babu Susil Kumar De's patient work in bringing to light the patient and persevering work of these foreign founders of Bengali prose and of Bengali Press cannot be overrated. He has not forgotten his own countrymen who under the guidance of these philanthropic Europeans enriched their own literature by writing a number of works on a variety of subjects.

The search for manuscripts of Bengali Literature is still going on unabated, the newspapers and magazines teem

with descriptions of old manuscripts of old works brought to light and two names stand prominent in this department of literary activity : one is a Muhammadan gentleman in Chittagong, Moulvi Abdul Karim, who has collected and described several thousands of Bengali manuscripts of works written both by Hindus and Muhammadans and his descriptions are always full and accurate and possess much literary and historical value. Chittagong being an out-of-the-way place free from the vicissitudes of the richer and more favoured districts of Bengal have preserved many valuable relics of the past and among these the manuscripts of the works of Bengali Literature, and it is a matter of congratulation that these have fallen into the hands of such an earnest and enthusiastic worker like our friend Abdul Karim. The other gentleman is Babu Siva Ratan Mitra who has made a large collection of manuscripts and described them but has not yet been able to publish much.

While these earnest men were enthusiastically working in the plains with Bengali manuscripts, Bengali works, their history, their influence, their literary merit and so on, a Bengali Brāhman, who for obvious reasons should be nameless here, was working patiently, quietly with the dusty heaps of palmleaf manuscripts in the Royal and private collections in the depth of the Himalayas, in the City of Khatmandu and in its neighbourhood. His work was of a thrilling nature, sometimes he gets a lost epic of the first century A. D., sometimes a work on Buddhist logic, sometimes one of Buddhist Philosophy, sometimes a *Purāna* copied in the sixth century script, sometimes an unknown work of the Saiva sect, sometimes the Sanskrit original of a work known only in Tibetan translation, sometimes the Sanskrit original of a work known only in Chinese translation, sometimes a work on astronomy translated from Greek into Sanskrit, sometimes a *Samhita*, a class of literature intermediate between *Puran* and *Tantra*, sometimes an

ancient work on Hindu medicine, sometimes a genealogy of the kings of Nepal, sometimes a genealogy of the Brahmanas of Māithila, sometimes the standard work of a sect which has now only a few representatives in Thibet alone, sometimes a work on Smṛiti compilation made in the 11th century and a lot of Tantric works of various shades of opinions and forms, all inculcating the worship of deities in extremely amorous position representing the 50 letters of the India alphabet as the forms of different deities, instructing how these letters and their combinations are to be spiritualized and enlivened into the form of divinities and preaching sensual and, nay, sexual pleasure as the *summum bonum* of human bliss. The pleasure and thrilling delights of these discoveries kept him always occupied. But he longed for more, he longed for some discoveries towards the elucidation of the ancient history and literature of his own country, dear old Bengal. Once he got a history of Bengal for two or three reigns in the 11th century supplementing and adding to the knowledge of Bengal history under the Pālas from epigraphic records. The service which the publication of Ramacharita or the History of Rāmapāla Deva has done is now well known. Spiteful people may magnify a printing mistake here and a clerical error there into grave serious mistakes and inexcusable faults, but that is the store house of information to which every one must turn in his need. But the delight of this Brahman knew no bound when he laid his hands, one fine morning, on a palmleaf manuscript in the early 12th century Bengali script, of a collection of Bengali songs with Sanskrit commentary attached. About the date of the script he had no doubt. It was Bengali on the face of it, much older Bengali handwriting than that given in Professor Bendall's photo etching at the end of his Catalogue of Buddhist Manuscripts in the Cambridge University Library, and belonging to the year 1198. If so, he argued the script

belong to the early 12th century, the Sanskrit commentary must be earlier than that time. The collection of songs must precede the commentary, and the composition of the songs must precede the collection. The songs belong to 20 different authors, whose signatures are invariably attached to the last lines of their songs. The authors therefore must belong to the 10th century at least, and all this afforded food to his thought, reflection and study for several years.

The songs belong to 20 different authors, all called Siddhāchāryyas. Of these again Lui is called the Adī Siddhāchāryya, the first Siddhāchāryya. Darik, another Siddhāchāryya, says that it is through the grace of Lui that he has attained the twelfth stage of progress and has now become fully equal to Buddha. Darik seems therefore to be an immediate disciple of Lui. Krishnāchāryya was a Siddhāchāryya. From his language he appears to have been a Bengali. He uses such peculiarly Bengali words as Chināli, Jautuka, tāla bol bob for bobā, or dumb, kāl for kālā deaf, bhālī for bhala, dehu for deo, māli for mālā, garland. Four of his descendants are among the authors of these songs, namely Sarorūha or Saraha, Dharma or Dhāmapāda, Dhendhana or Dhetana and Māhipadā. Kambala or Kāmalī is one of the authors and Kankana is one of his descendants. Vīrūpa or Virua is one of the Siddhāchāryyas and Vināpada is his descendant. So it is clear that these belong to several, at least, to two generations. The songs in this collection have been taken from their own collections of songs or gītīs. The vernacular works in ancient Bengal, were either gītī or songs, or gāthā ballads, or dohā couplet. If this is true then there were in ancient Bengal altogether 33 poets whose Bengali works have been preserved in Tibetan Translations. These 33 also wrote many works in Sanskrit. Some of them were men of wide fame and wielded much influence in Buddhist countries, for instance, Atisha or Dīpankar

Srijñāna, who reformed Tibetan Buddhism in the second quarter of the 11th century, wrote several collections of gītīs and he was the son of the Rājā of Vikramipore, east of Magadha. Nāda Pandit, from whom Atisha learned Tantrika Buddhism and who has a great name still in Tibet, was a writer in the Vernacular.

As regards the chronology of these songs it can be proved in this way. Atisha, as stated before, was the son of a Prince of Vikramanipura east of Magadha. So he was a Bengali, Nāda Pandit was his guru. He went to Suvarnadvīpa or Indo-Chinese Peninsula to study Mahājāna. Then he became the chief Abbot of Vikramasīla Vihāra. In the year 1038 he was invited to Tibet at the age of 58. He worked there for 14 years and died at the age of 72. But early in life, most likely before leaving for Suvarnadvīpa, he wrote a work entitled Abhisamayabibhanga in collaboration with Lui. As Lui's name stands first and Atisha's after his, Lui appears to have been the elder of the two. We may therefore take the period of Lui's literary activity in the last half of the 10th century A. D. and that of the sect founded by him between 950 to 1100 A. D. But who was Lui? He was an inhabitant of Rādha where he is still worshipped by the followers of Dharma who often dedicate a he-goat to Lui and it is a sin to kill the goat so dedicated and in that portion of the Mayūrabhanj State which is still called Rādha he is still worshipped as a siddhapurusha or saint. In Tibet he is still worshipped as one of the wise men. He was very fond of eating the entrails of the fish and therefore he had a nickname Matsāntrāda or the eater of the entrails of the fish, and the Cataloguist of the Tangur remarks that he should be distinguished from Matsendra-nāth, the son of Minanātha, the founder of the Saiva Yogi sect.

When the founder of the sect was a Bengali and he wrote in Bengali, it is natural to suppose that his followers



also wrote in Bengali. If his followers belonged to any other nationality, their idioms will be a little different and so some of the songs are tinged with Oriya and other idioms. This plainly shows that the language of the songs is mainly Bengali. But in those remote ages the languages were not so well marked as they are now. Hence following Tārānath Wassiljew thought that some of the works mentioned in the Tāngur were written in the Apabhraṃśa dialects and Professor Bendall thought that they were written in Prakrit or Buddhist Prakrit. These words Prakrit and Apabhraṃśa are used very loosely. The Bengali, even the modern Bengali, is often called by our old class Pandits, as Prakrit. The Pandits, when they find a language which does not conform to the rules of the current Prakrit grammars, often call it Apabhraṃśa, a word which etymologically means fallen from the standard of purity as set forth in grammars. So these words are often used in a loose and unscientific way. The scientific way of dealing with Sanskritic languages would be to name them after the district and the century. The language of Asoka inscriptions should be spoken of in this way, as 'the Magadha dialect of the third century B. C. But even then it would not be strictly accurate as these inscriptions show a variation in pronunciation and idiom. So, strictly speaking, they should be called the Guzerat dialect of the third century B. C., the Punjab dialect of the same period and so on. So these songs should be described as written in the dialect of Western Bengal in the 10th and 11th centuries. Sometime one song may be tinged with the idiom of the dialect of that particular follower of Lui who wrote it. Since Lui wrote, many revolutions of a sweeping nature have passed over Western Bengal and the changes wrought in the language have been violent and it is wonderful that one can yet recognize his language as Bengali.

Wassiljew saw only the Tibetan translations of what he calls the Apabhraṃśa works, so he has simply followed

what the translators said. Professor Bendall saw only a few *dohās* in the *Subhāṣitasamgraha* which he edited. The number of these *dohās* quoted from various authors is, I believe, 28. All of them again not complete *dohās*. From these he concluded that the language was either Buddhist Prakrit or simply Prakrit. Now the *dohās* are generally written in an elevated and archaic language. But that is not the case with the songs. The songs are, as a rule, written in the language and idiom of the people. They are intended to touch their heart. So there must be a bit of difference between the language of *dohās* and that of the songs. But after a study of the songs it would be quite easy to pass a judgment as to the language of the *dohās*. When the songs are Bengali of the 10th century the *dohās* represent the archaic dialect of that period. Professor Bendall had his own doubts about the language of the isolated *dohās* that came in his hands, for in one place he calls them Prakrit, in another he calls them *Buddhist* Prakrit, in another he calls them *Apabhraṃśa*. He found that they do not conform to the rules of Prakrit grammar and so he qualifies the expression by adding *Buddhist* to it. But as yet no work in *Buddhist Prakrit* is known.

The extent of the actual discovery is fifty songs and two *dohākosas* or collections of *dohās*, each by one author. The authors of these *dohākosas* again are to be found among the composers of the songs. A careful comparison of the authors' *dohās* and their songs will bear out the fact that the *dohās* are written in a more dignified and archaic language. These are not isolated *dohās* like those in Professor Bendall's *Subhāṣitasamgraha* but a long series of *dohās*, teaching one doctrine from the beginning to the end, and so afford better material for a comparison of the languages of the *dohās* and songs.

The songs are extremely musical and in no way inferior in this respect to the *Kirtana* songs of the

Vaisnava followers of Chaitanya six hundred years later. The rāgus or tunes are almost the same. The method of singing and the musical instruments almost the same. So the originality claimed by the Vaisnavas in inventing *Kirtana* does not hold good. In the Vaisnava Kirtana, the first couplet of the song is repeated as a burden (or Dhūyā) as often as other couplets are sung. But in the Buddhist song all the couplets seem to have been repeated to make the singing long and imposing. This may be very successful with the kind of audience they then had, but would be too tedious and irksome to a more refined audience. Buddhist works either in Sanskrit or in the mixed dialect either in Pali or in any other dialect are verbose and full of repetition. The Bengali songs and *dohās* are not so. But by often repeating every line in singing they made up for want of verbosity. The last couplet always contains, as in Vaisnava songs, the signature of the poet and a summary of ideas contained in the song, and it rounds up the music with some effect.

The social position of the authors of the songs differed considerably from that of the Vaisnava authors. In those old days brahmanas were few in Bengal and their followers almost a negligible quantity. The little Aryan culture the people then had came filtered through Buddhism. But still the poets of the songs came from the highest society of the time. Their language was not boorish but elevated and dignified and they tried to make it as much Sanskritized as they could for even then Sanskrit was supposed to give dignity and add respectability. The comparisons are drawn from natural objects such as lotus, mountains, rivers, etc., but what strikes one as peculiar is the oft-repeated *simile* with boats and their constituent parts, the oars, helms, ropes, pegs, and so on. Another fruitful source of comparison is the milking of cows. The authors seem to have been substantial boatmen, cowherds and men in a similar position.

These songs do not seem to be the first of their kind in Bengali. There seem to have been other Hindu songs and poetry, for in the Sanskrit commentary of this are quoted some verses as belonging to *Paradarsanas* or foreign religion or to *Bahissāstra*, outside *sāstra*. One of these is by Minahatha, the founder of the Saiva Yogī sect, otherwise called Nāthas. The Saiva sect is always regarded as belonging to the ninth century A. D. Wassiljew following Tārānāth says that they flourished about 800 A. D. Hodgeson seems also be of the same mind. The passage quoted from Minanāth is undoubtedly good Bengali and may stand good with slight modifications even in modern times. It is impossible to resist the temptation of quoting it.

কহন্তি গুরু পরনার্ধের বাট  
কস্ম কুরঙ্গ দমাধিক পাট।  
কমল বিকসিল কহিহ ন জনরা  
কমল মধু পিবিনি ধোকে ন ভগরা ॥

In the word পরনার্ধের, “*era*,” as an inflection of the possessive case is distinctly Bengali. কহন্তি, অস্তি, as an inflection for third person singular was current in Bengali up to the 16th century and the Mahābharata translated under the patronage of Parāgale Khān is full of this form of expression. Baṭa and paṭa are still current in many places. কহিহ and বিকসিল are still current. The same is the case with ধোকে. An energetic and careful search may bring to light the ancient literature of sect of Nathas who are still very influential in many parts of India and have left in Bengal an intelligent, wealthy and influential caste of Nathayogīs. The doctrine of the Siddhāchāryyas are an outcome of the Mahāyana doctrine of Buddhism, though in criticizing the doctrine of other sects one of the Siddhāchāryyas, Sarosuhavajra speaks contemptuously of the Mahāyana.

Yet there is not the least shadow of a doubt that Sahajayāna is a necessary consequence of that doctrine. It bases itself on Sunyavāda, the distinctive doctrine of Mahāyana and argues in this fashion, "if the whole world is void, if the phenomenal existence is an illusion, then there is no *bandha* or bondage, for that being included in the phenomenal existence, is also void. If there is no bondage there is no Nirvāna, for Nirvāna is simply the negation of bondage. If bondage is an illusion, Nirvāna is also an illusion. Every man is by his nature perfectly free and one of the poets fervently sings :—

অপণে রচি রচি ভবনির্ব্বাণা  
মিছেঁ লোভ বন্ধাবএ অপনা ।

It is for nothing that people cause bondage to themselves by creating the world and Nirvana.

অশ্বে ন জান হুঁ অচিন্ত জোই  
জাম মরণ ভব কইমন হোই ।

We are transcendental yogis ; we do not know how there can be birth, death and existence.

জইসো জাম মরণ বি তইসো  
জীবন্তে মঅনে নাহি বিশেসো ।

As is birth so is death. There is no distinction between them.

জা এখু জাম মরণে বিমঙ্কা  
সো করউ রসা বমানেরে কথা ।

He who is afraid of birth and death may long for remedy against them.

যে সচরাচর তিদশ ভমন্তি  
তে অজরামর কি মপি ন হোন্তি ।

Those who roam in heaven and earth can never be either without death or without old age.

জামে কাম কি কামে জাম  
সরহ ভগতি অচিন্ত সো ধাম ।

Sarah says it is no consideration to us whether Karma leads to birth or birth leads to Karma.

This being the essential doctrine of the sect to them there is no virtue, no vice, no religious merit and no sin. The only bar to the enjoyment of the objects of senses is the realization of the evanescent character of the world. That attained and you are free to act just as you like. But that realization depends entirely upon the instruction received from the guru and not on anything else. Study, reading, meditation, Tantra and Mantra are all useless, absolutely of no worth. One of the poets says :—Guru's instruction is nectar. Those fools who never drink it die of thirst in the deserts created by lots of scriptures. One of the poets concludes his *dhōṭīkosa* by saying the absolute monic mind, which may be compared to a tree spreading over the whole space, flowers and produces the mighty fruit, “পর উষ্মার,”—do good to others.

The poets were in a very difficult position in explaining the abstruse metaphysical doctrines of the Mahāyāna to ordinary people, who had no metaphysical training and so they had recourse to metaphors and this was allowable in the teaching of Buddha, who laid great emphasis on *Upāya kausalyya*, or as Kern translates it, Skilfulness, *i.e.*, the use of innumerable examples and metaphors. One of the metaphors used, and that constantly, to express the condition when the idea of duality disappears and the idea of monism remains supreme, is the union of males and females. The human mind represents the male and Nirātma devi or void, as female. The void is often called the *Mahāmudrā* the great seal. The mind in approaching the seal gets merged into it. And to impress upon a devoted crowd of listeners, the importance of this approach all the details of a man wooing a woman are given in all

their attractive forms, and the final stage of transcendental existence is described by another poet in the following way.

“As salt is merged in water so does the mind in the wife or *Mehāmudrā*. At once they become one and so they remain eternally.”

From this metaphor they have evolved the doctrine of *Mehāsukha* or great and eternal pleasure. A pleasure which you can yourself understand and enjoy but which you cannot explain to another. The guru imparts this knowledge in a language which they call *Sandhyābhāṣā*, or twilight language, the use of which is sanctioned by Buddha himself in *Mahāyāna Sūtras*.

These are some of the strong and weak points of the Sahaja doctrine to understand the historical development of which will exceed the limits of space at the disposal of the writer.

The influence of the Sahaja doctrine permeates the religious thought of the whole of Northern India. The absence of *pāpa* and *puṇya*, vice and virtue, has led to much immorality in certain sects. Krishna is regarded as the only male and the rest of the creation as *Prakṛiti* and so any woman may go to any man thinking only that he is Krishna. The exalted position of the guru has induced his disciples to devote their *tan*, *man* and *dhan*, their body, soul and wealth to his service. He is sometimes regarded as greater than even Buddha himself. He is Lama in Tibet, *Karttā* in Bengal, *Bābā* in Hindustan. He is the only exalted personage in Buddhism and is the sole mediator between God and man in Hinduism. The metaphor of union has led to those amorous statues in Hindu and Buddhist temples, which are a mystery to all observers. It has led to the worship of Heruk and Hevajra and other Buddhist deities united with their *sakties* in permanent union. It has led to Jugal worship in Vaisnavism and of Siva and Sakti in various forms of union. It has also led

to many practices and customs which should not be detailed in polite society. But it has also given birth to that universal spirit of benevolence which is peculiar to Buddhism and to India and which one of their exalted poets has described as পর উদার. It has brought together the two great Buddhist ideas of Sunyatā and Kurunā and made them harmonize with each other and it has produced that attractive doctrine of union or monism before which pales the Advaita doctrine of Samkara. Bengal was the great stronghold of this Advaya doctrine and this is evidenced by so many passages in the songs “Bange jāyā nilēsi,” “Adaya Bangale,” “Bangāli bhaili,” and so on, and it is the influence of the Advaya doctrine which kept Sanskara’s Advailavāda away from Bengal.

HARAPRASAD SASTRI.

*Calcutta.*



## WEMBLETON IN WAR TIME.

BY SHELLAND BRADLEY.

**I**T is my fate and my delight to dwell in the little Leicestershire village of Wembleton. The War is the one standard that we measure all things by now-a-days and so small and insignificant a unit of the great British Empire is Wembleton that it numbered, when the War broke out, only eleven men of military age all told within its borders. Comparatively broad in acres, its few houses lie strangely scattered. It does not even possess a village street and its only public house lies across the boundary in an adjoining parish. Yet its population is given in books of reference as nearer two thousand than one thousand souls and it was something of a shock to us to discover that among them all there were only eleven able-bodied men between the ages of nineteen and thirty-eight, considerably less than ten per cent. The figures furnished a striking commentary on the tendency of modern English life and the change that has come over the face of rural England in the last hundred years. It was the country squire, the yeoman and the agricultural labourer who won for us the great fights of a century ago, and though all these so long as they survive will never fail to carry on their great traditions, the city clerk, the industrial labourer, the miner and the town-bred lad, with splendid courage and devotion, bid fare to share with them the glories of the final victory that we trust the coming year will bring.

So peaceful is our village, so far does it lie beyond the storm and stress of life that for the first few days the beginning of the most momentous war in history failed to make any impression upon its outward imperturbability. To us who knew and realised it meant so much—the hurried

departure of those dear to us, sometimes without even so much as the spoken word of farewell, the awful suspense, the knowledge of all the wide-spread grief and horror that modern warfare must inevitably bring in its train. But to the villagers it was at first only a far off rumour of dread things. To them personally it meant for the moment so little. Not one of those they loved, not one of those they even knew was going forth to play his part in the great fight for England's honour, and imagination is not a strong point with the villagers of Wembleton. They are a stolid people, the people of Leicestershire, and this was a strange new thing that had never come within the range of their experience nor within that of their fathers nor even of their father's fathers before them. There was nothing of the military spirit about Wembleton. One of the most famous battles of the Wars of the Roses had been fought on the outskirts of the village. Of that we proudly kept the memory. There was also a vague tradition that one family in the village whose pedigree one might have traced back for centuries in the parish registers, had sent one of its members to fight Napoleon at Waterloo, but the Crimean War, even the South African struggle of a few years since, had passed and left no mark on Wembleton. We still lived on our memories of the Wars of the Roses. The clash of arms in the centuries that had followed had come to us only as from a great way off. The magnitude of all that was happening to-day seemed beyond its grasp. Long centuries of peaceful undisturbed possession of their homes seemed to have robbed its inhabitants of the power even to conceive the havoc that was being wrought to other homes so close at hand but just across the English Channel. Great principles of international politics, necessary to maintain the balance of power among European nations, these were things so far outside the daily run of village life that they seemed to have but an academic interest at the most.

"Let 'em fight it out amongst theirselves," said to me one old man whom I was trying to interest in the war so that perchance he might induce his son to enlist. "What for 'ave we got cause to interfere?"

I tried to explain it all to him, our treaty obligations, our pledged word as a nation, how we were bound to fulfil our promise and come to the help of little Belgium against her powerful aggressor who was flagrantly breaking her own solemn promise in attacking her.

"What for did us ever make such a promise?" he asked unconvinced. "We oughtn't to 'ave made no promises. Leave they furriners to fight it out amongst theirselves, that's what I says."

Again I tried to explain it to him putting it this time on the lower level of self-interest. With Belgium overrun and France conquered, the Germans would have been top dog in Europe and it would have been only a question of time before our own turn came to be swept aside, perhaps ravaged as Belgium had been, and with no friendly hand left stretched out to help us. But it was difficult work. The old man, like many more intelligent than he, was a true armchair critic, failing utterly to grasp the greatness of the struggle and the real and awful danger that overshadowed us. Generations of phlegmatic ease had dulled the primitive instinct of fear of personal danger. He could not get it out of his head that we were unassailably secure and that we ought to leave "they furriners to fight it out amongst theirselves."

"It's all the doin' of that there—" said another with whom I spoke, mentioning the name of a certain much talked of politician. "It's he and his like as are responsible for this war."

He was the one man in the village who prided himself on his knowledge of current politics and when the villagers met in conclave at the public house across our borders, as I fear they did most nights, his was the

voice most often heard. Opinionated and ill informed his gift of speech, his facility in putting the little he knew into apt phrases, made him a great power for good or ill in Wembleton. Him, too, I tried to guide into a broader road of thought but the molehill of political bias hid from his mind the greatness of the world-wide issues that hung in the balance.

So it was that during those first few days of war I felt strangely disheartened and disillusioned with the Wembleton I had always known and accepted so complacently as all that was desirable in home and village. It seemed to my ardent enthusiasm to fail so lamentably to rise to the great occasion. Never before had I known how hard it was to be laid aside. All that was in me answered to the call to arms, yet it might not be. We as a household had done what we could, had given of our best even before the sun had set upon that first anxious day when the edict of war had gone forth. One, already a soldier, had but rushed home to us to bid us a hurried farewell and then had gone we know not whither. Another, still at the 'Varsity, had hurried off as promptly to besiege an uncle, a general on the staff, with offers of his services anywhere in any capacity if only he might play his part. We had given our all. Only an old man bent with the weight of years and I "not eligible for military service" remained to watch the slow hours drag on into days and weeks and months with sickening anxiety gripping at our hearts. The only two other big houses in Wembleton had been no whit behind us; indeed in one sense they had given even more than we. We had given all our manhood, yet there still remained two more mankind amongst us. And for the fact that those two were still at school, far below any possible recruiting age, deep down in my cowardly heart I thanked God daily. Of course we would have given them and given them gladly if need had come but could

one help being thankful that this last sacrifice was not required of us? In those other two houses in Wembleton they needed even braver hearts than ours. For each had given an only son, nay more, an only child. Only two lonely old men were left, the Squire at the Manor and the General at the Hall, and between them lay the gulf of a feud that had lasted twenty years. It was only some trivial dispute in the beginning, but in the minds of both it had rankled and led to further misunderstanding until the final breach had come. Now for twenty years they had not spoken. Sunday after Sunday they came to the village Church, occupying their respective pews, the Squire to the right of the aisle and the General to the left, but always they passed out and down the churchyard path with never a word, silently oblivious of each other's presence. Both had been widowed many years before and there was only one thing that each of them lived for. Their sons were almost of the same age and the hatred of the parents seemed to have imbued them with a spirit of rivalry from their earliest days. The one had gone to Eton, the other to Harrow but at Sandhurst they had met. When they were both at Wembleton, however, the gulf that separated the two houses was still unbridged, and the rumour went that the younger generation bade fair to carry on the feud as bitterly as the older one had done. Not for many a year, they said, had the old General taken anything so bitterly to heart as the news that it was his hated neighbour's son who had outstripped his own son and won the coveted Sword of honour. That was five years ago and now both sons were fighting side by side for England. Only the two old men, lonely and embittered, remained to watch and wait.

But if I almost despaired of the villagers at first for their phlegmatic lack of interest and their failure to appreciate the great issues at stake, I had one thought to console me. At least there was no panic. Stolidity, annoying as it may be to an eager temperament, has its advantages. If it does

not easily move forward, at least it does not run away. There was no greedy hurrying to forestall one's neighbour and lay in stocks of provisions, no selfish impulse to lay up treasure for oneself, regardless of the fact that by so doing one was helping to create panic, to dislocate trade and raise prices to the detriment of one's poorer fellowmen. If Wembleton was unresponsive and slow to move in those first days of war, at least it was not indecorous or unseemly.

And as the days went by and there came to us the news of that wonderful silent passing of our army across the channel into France, the first time for a hundred years that our troops equipped for war had landed on those shores, there came also the first faint signs of stirring in our dear delightful sleepy village. The call for men had come, an urgent call to defend our land against a great relentless foe. Invasion of our own shores, much less of our peaceful village tucked securely away in the heart of England, still seemed far off and unreal, but day by day there filtered through to us the story of another nation in the death throes, heroically battling for life and honour against tremendous odds. It was the youngest among all those eleven able-bodied men who made the first tentative hesitating move. He was just nineteen and I had known him since he was four. Straight, upstanding, strong and broad for his age, he was a splendid specimen of English countryman. Hitherto he had shewn no desire for anything but to follow the plough as his father had done before him. He was a typical Wembletonian, his physique far outstripping his intellect, but a few words I had spoken to him of the war had stirred his slow moving mind. They were hesitating words that I had spoken, half eager to send him to his country's help, and half fearful of all that it would mean to him and his. With the other ten I had had no hesitation whatsoever, though as yet all I had said seemed to have failed of result, but this was

such a boy both in years and mind and moreover he was the only son of his mother and she was a widow. Yet were these things sufficient to keep him back? Suddenly I realised the responsibility that was mine. I had seen more of him than of any other of the youths in the village. For a time he had looked after my horses and many a time he had lent an extra hand in the making of my garden, always showing a quiet eagerness to carry out my wishes. I felt that I had but to urge him and he would go. Yet he had scarcely been outside the village in his life. How would he fare when thrown suddenly into the company of town bred lads, older, immeasurably smarter and more knowing in the ways of the world than he? The same youth who went out from us, from the sheltered quietness of village life into the noise and stir of camps and the knowledge of the world, could never return. Whether for good or for evil, change was inevitable. But should we keep him back for this? Surely it is good for a man that his metal should be proved, that he should meet life face to face. Again, if he went the day might come when, trained and drilled, he might be called to fill a place left vacant at the Front. The Angel of Death might claim him as he was already claiming so many others. Could I ever look his mother in the face again if it had been my words that had bidden him go? And yet was she to keep her own safe and inactive while England stood at bay in need of just such strength as his?

It was only for a few brief moments that such thoughts held me in their paralysing grip. It was clear to me where my duty lay and where lay his. In a few words I told him that it was his to go when his King and country had need of him. On the morrow he went. And such was the force of this one example, that brought them for the first time personally into touch with the great world movement in the person of that one recruit, their fellow villager, that Wembleton awoke. The call

that had been so many days unheard, had been heard at last. It was as I knew it would be. The great heart of England beat as steadfastly in Wembleton as in any other place, little or great, within our coasts. It was only that its beat had grown so regular and even with the peaceful passing of the years that it needed a clear inspiring call and a personal example to wake it to quicker life. And once roused Wembleton was content with no half measures. Within a week it had given its all. Every one of those other ten able-bodied men of recruiting age had gone to bear their share of the burden. It was the personal example from among themselves that had told. To that first recruit, the youngest of them all, I ascribe the first awakening of Wembleton.

It was astonishing how great a difference that awakening made. For the hospital we had improvised in the old disused school house we had relied almost entirely upon the generous help of our own friends in the neighbourhood, the Squire and the General backing us up loyally with gifts in money and in kind. Until now I had felt that the villagers regarded it all as something apart, almost as another whim of ours that would never materialise into anything practical. It was so difficult for them to conjure up the picture of sorely wounded men in peaceful Wembleton and though our efforts had been approved at headquarters we lay far afield and none had been sent to us as yet. Doubtless if they had come before the great awakening their presence would have stirred the village, but now, although our hospital still stood empty, their eager interest was aroused. Was it not of just such a hospital as this that their own dear ones might some day stand in need? So it came to pass that anything they could offer, any personal labour they could give, anything that their little well tended gardens could provide was at our service. And even that was not enough.



"Why aren't we takin' in no Belgiums?" demanded of me the same old man who only a few weeks before had been indignant that we had not left 'they furriners to fight it out amongst theirselves.' Now the indignation in his voice seemed to reproach me for remissness in not having suggested this new effort.

I explained to him that we had strained our resources to the utmost in our efforts to provide the dozen beds and all the necessary accessories for the wounded and much as we should have liked to do it we had not felt equal to undertaking the care of Belgian refugees as well.

"There's them two cottages up at Piper's Corner wot's bin empty these six months," he said musingly with the air of a man brushing aside my explanations as mere excuses.

"If you will all come forward and help me I will undertake it," I said, moved by a sudden impulse. Was I going to let the great awakening that had come to Wembleton fail to stir me also to fresh efforts?

"Us'll talk it over" he said nodding his head as if a fixed idea that it would be difficult to shake out again had just entered into it. "I'm thinkin' as 'ow it can be done. Us'll talk it over."

The following evening they came to me and in ten minutes it was all settled. The Squire would give us the cottages rent free, of that I had no doubt, and the villagers had already made a list of things necessary, promising to provide them all themselves. The two cottages adjoining one another could conveniently accommodate a family of eight, perhaps of ten, if they numbered several young children among them. Carried away by their eagerness, I wrote the letter there and then making our offer and saying that we should be ready for them in three days' time. There was only one point on which the villagers showed any anxiety. We were late with our offer and they were terribly afraid lest the supply of 'Belgiums' might not equal the demand.

Within three days those cottages were ready. We had all worked like slaves but the result was a triumph that well repaid us. They were raw, damp, dismal days through which we had worked at them but always there had been a glow of warmth at my heart. One after another they had come, faithfully bringing the things they had promised and gradually it was borne in upon me that these things that they were bringing were not their oldest things and the things they themselves no longer wanted. In every case they were giving of their best. It made me feel that anything I might give would be so poor a sacrifice in comparison. You could not have said, when all was done, that those cottages were furnished in any particular style. The things brought from the four corners of the village and beyond went strangely ill together, many of them. But I think it was their very incongruity that brought the sudden tears to my eyes as I gave a last look round: they represented the loving care of so many kindly hearts. One could only hope the 'Belgiums' when they came would read in them something of the sympathy and forethought that was so plainly written there for me.

It was not long that the little home we had prepared had to wait for its inmates. The supply of 'Belgiums' alas! seemed overwhelming. They came one brilliant autumn afternoon when Wembleton lay clothed in all its red brown glory. They were a family of nine and the moment I saw them and greeted them all my anxieties were set at rest. It had been something of a risk that we had run. In spite of all the vigilance of a much harassed headquarters committee, necessarily working with but the scantiest knowledge of newly arrived refugees, ours might have been undesirable as some inevitably were, bound to be. Or a lesser calamity, but still a calamity, they might have been able to speak nothing but Flemish which would have thrust something

of a damper on our welcome and our hospitality. Even the barrier of French was hard enough. I stood alone to fill the place of interpreter between them and their generous hosts and my French, though learned long since in Belgium itself, had grown rusty with the years. But as I awaited them at the gate of the cottage and watched them descend from the motor that the Squire had kindly sent to fetch them from the station, I knew that all was well. They were all women save two small boys, aged about four and five, and one youth who looked scarce out of his teens but whose bandaged arm and hand showed that he had not been deemed too young for the honour of fighting for his native land. The way in which, after his first swift salute to me on alighting, he turned and helped the eldest member of the little company out from the well packed motor, won my heart straightaway. She was a dear little fragile old lady, who, it seemed, inconceivable could have survived what she had gone through in the cruel flight that followed the burning of their home and all that they possessed before their eyes. They were of the peasant class but no aristocrat could have endured the horrors of the French Revolution with greater seeming stoicism and indifference than they. At first it puzzled me. Their quiet, respectful manners, unruffled even by the strangeness of their new surroundings, gave no indication of all that they had endured. They were stranded, actually penniless, two small bags and a bundle containing all their worldly possessions beyond what they stood up in. The man of the family, son, husband, and father to the little group that had come to take possession of our cottage and our hearts, was missing. A soldier, he had been swept into the vortex of great contending armies and none knew where he might be, whether even alive or dead. The youngest of the family, an infant few months old, had succumbed to the hardships of the flight and they had left her buried by the roadside in a nameless

grave. Their pitiful story as we learned it bit by bit—for they were not the kind to make capital out of their sufferings—was one long tragedy. It had taken them nearly a month from the day they had seen their home in flames to reach the haven that we grew so proud to have been able to provide for them. Travel-stained and weary as they were when they arrived, it was not as I had thought at first, that they were stunned, their feelings blunted for the moment by the tragedy of it all. It was simply that through all the sorrow of it there had come to them a wonderful and touching resignation. They did not need from us the comfort of the spirit. That was their own priceless possession. All that was left for us was to care for their material comfort and that we did with willing hands to the utmost of our power. It was not for us to comfort them with words. It was rather we who drew new strength from them. The old Belgian peasant woman, sitting in my own armchair that I, determined to be no whit behind my villagers in generosity, had sent down for her, saw the quick tears gather in my eyes, as she spoke of all that they and her unhappy countrymen had suffered.

“But it is the will of God,” she said simply and unaffectedly gently touching my arm as if she felt my unspoken sympathy and would comfort both herself and me.

They were English Tommies who came eventually to fill our little hospital. I had always admired our English Tommy afar off but what opportunity in time of peace does one ever get of knowing him? It was only now that I realised how far below his worth even in my admiration I had placed him. I think it was his lack of bitterness against our enemies that struck me most. Those English privates were extraordinarily well informed of all that had preceded and led up to the war. They realised fully with whom the responsibility lay and the hatred the Germans

bore us. Yet there was no bitterness in their hearts for the nation or the men who had done us and our allies so grievous a wrong, only an ungrudging admiration for their bravery. But there was no mistaking that we should beat them finally and rob them of the power to plunge Europe into war again. And as for themselves there were no complaints, no repinings, no railing against their fate even when that fate had maimed or crippled them for life.

"I have never nursed Tommies before," said one of the nurses to me one day "and I must say I couldn't have believed it. They aren't just men, they're heroes every one of them."

"Why don't they make every man in England a soldier?" was one of the other nurse's many comments as I came upon her suddenly one day, fiercely and surreptitiously brushing away her tears. "I don't care if I never see a civilian again."

It was the one who had appealed to us most of all whom we were destined to keep always with us within the shadow of our little village church. His was one of those splendidly sunny natures that seem to greet life with both hands outstretched and a smile of welcome that casts the sunlight even across the dreariest day. It was his extraordinary unselfishness and thoughtfulness for others that made him so lovable. He had been badly wounded in both arms as well as in half a dozen other places and one arm had had to be amputated before he came to us. The other they thought was safe but as the days passed our kindly young doctor looked grave and shook his head sadly when I asked him eagerly after our favourite patient. And then one morning on going down to the hospital I was told that he had motored over and fetched a neighbouring doctor to consult with him and they were together at that moment examining the arm. I waited outside, too anxious to hear the verdict to go in

and speak to the others as yet. It was not long that I had to wait but as they came out from the little room we had set apart for such occasions as this there was no need to ask.

"Is there no hope of saving it?" I asked with a sudden feeling of rebellion against fate. I shall never attain to the resignation of the Belgians.

Even the man to whom sickness and all the evils that the flesh is heir to, are a common sight, seemed to find words difficult.

"This afternoon" was all I caught as with a grip of the hand he turned away.

Quickly I stepped after him.

"Shall I go in?" I asked, dreading to see him yet longing to give him my unspoken sympathy. Full well I knew that Tommy would not like me to express my sympathy in words or looks. Yet how could one sit there and talk as if nothing were wrong?

"Yes, yes, go in, he's taking it splendidly" replied the doctor turning back to me, once more his own brisk self as he passed on in to see his other patients.

For a moment longer I waited looking out at the perfect freshness of the winter morning and then I opened the door and went in.

He was just the same as he had always been, looking out at the world through sunlit eyes. And at last after we had talked of other things he spoke to me of it indirectly of his own accord.

"It's mother I'm thinking of. She can't work any more you know" he said simply.

I seized eagerly upon the one thing I could do. There and then I took upon myself all responsibility so far as his mother was concerned. His grateful smile was full payment in advance.

"But there must be something I can do" he said bravely. "Why, wasn't there once a chap who had

neither arms nor legs and yet became a member of Parliament ?”.

But alas! there was nothing left for our brave soldier lad to do save to leave us the wonderful memory of a few last days of suffering bravely borne. But none of us who saw will ever forget. Reverently we laid him within the shadow of the grey church tower to sleep his last long sleep, until the day break and the shadows flee away.

A few days later the news came to us that the Squire's son had followed the same road to death and deathless remembrance, laying down his life for his country in one of the fiercest battles ever fought. That was a terrible week through which we passed. Our own turn came next. Not one but two of those fatal telegrams came to us within a few hours of one another robbing us for ever of both those we had sent forth. Our own loss was grievous enough but to the Squire the loss of his only son was, if possible, a still more terrible blow. For generations father and son had succeeded one another and now there was no heir save a distant and almost unknown cousin. The old man was left alone to drink to the dregs the cup of utter loneliness and loss.

Ten days later it was Christmas morning and we gathered again in the little village church where so many of us had come on almost every Christmas day that we could remember. The Squire was in his accustomed seat, a little older, a little more bent, and it seemed to me as I looked across the church that the General too had suddenly aged, shrunken as if still quivering under some tremendous blow. The very brilliance of the crisp clear morning, the very joyousness of the pealing of the bells, even the words of the most beautiful of all services seemed at first to mock us in the midst of our grief and the noise and tumult of war. Surely never since that first

Christmas day had there been one so full of all that made for strife and hatred and illwill. Throughout the centuries we had celebrated the Great Nativity with its wonderful message of peace on earth and goodwill towards men only after nineteen hundred years to come to this. The exquisite words of the service seemed but to conjure up the vision of an ideal seen only from a great way off.

Then slowly as the majestic words flowed on the torment in one's soul grew still. The age-long message that has never failed made its own irresistible appeal, heard even above the passing thunder of battle and the momentary tumult of war. Vaguely and dimly one grew to realise that beneath them, over-shadowed it might be for a space but never lost, there lay the peace of the spirit that no man taketh away, the peace that passeth all understanding. So it came to be that the close of the service found one stilled again and ready once more to take up the burden of all that might yet remain. Peace had come to one's own heart, but goodwill among men? Surely that was a great way off. And then as we filed slowly out of church something of that too came to me in a flash.

The old bent figure of the Squire had paused in the porch, half turning back towards the church. A few paces behind the General had followed him and in a moment the two men who had not spoken for twenty years stood face to face. I can never be quite sure even now which one it was who spoke to the other first. I drew back quickly lest my presence might lend a further embarrassment to that strange meeting, but before I turned their hands had met. And when I looked again the two old men were walking together down the path that for twenty years they had trodden Sunday by Sunday in bitter silence and apart. It was only later in the day that I learned the added pathos that those two figures held. That very morning only an hour before the



Service had begun the General had received the news that his son too had fallen. Across the graves of all their hopes, of all that they held dearest in life in their utter loneliness, their hands had met. Goodwill had come to them at last.

It has been a bitter cost to pay but can one say that it has been paid altogether in vain so far as Wembleton is concerned? And Wembleton is but one tiny insignificant village in the heart of a world-wide Empire.

SHELLAND BRADLEY, .

# THE COMING UNIVERSITY COMMISSION.\*

BY R. N. GILCHRIST,  
*Principal, Krishnagar College.*

## II.

**I**N my first article on this subject published in the *Calcutta Review*, I ventured to give a few reflections on some of the wider problems of our local University education. I now propose to continue from another point of view my analysis of the basis of any future reconstruction. The chief difficulty of the Commission will be not *how* to organise but *what* to organise. The fundamental question of the material for organisation and the conditions of organisation must be settled before new constitutions can be drawn up. To revise the present constitution of Calcutta University is a minor task, and a Commission which confines its efforts to this will perform only a minor service. The root questions must be tackled, and inasmuch as they are the same or are likely to be the same in all the provinces of India, the Commission will necessarily be not only a local but also an All-India Commission.

Before proceeding with my present task, I must recall the main contentions of my previous article. After pointing out how the aims of true education had been vitiated in India by various causes, I argued that the weaknesses of Calcutta University were to be ascribed largely to the inefficiency of the schools. The difficulty of excessive numbers in the University and its colleges is mainly due to the lack of sifting by the schools. One other factor, it

\* This article was written before the local composition of the Commission was announced.

was pointed out, in the numbers question, is the smallness of fees. The raising of educational standards and the raising of fees were held to be the chief solutions. Some of the questions connected with the second of these I propose to discuss now. The financial aspect of our question shares with the raising of standards the necessity for a true public spirit. A university, like a government, is an emblem of the type of will prevailing in a community ; it is a type, indeed, of the highest will. It is of the most supreme importance, therefore, that the will underlying it should be a good one. In all societies goodness of will consists in disinterested action for the common good, action which should show a perfect fusion of private and public interests. If there is one fault that our local institutions show above another, it is a tendency for private or sectional ends to swamp the common good. Our institutions, therefore, must be guarded against a danger inherent in themselves till they themselves eradicate it in their own course of development.

Accepting the truth that in the schools lies the salvation of the University, we may set it down as a corollary that the major part of our public funds should, in the future, be devoted to schools. In Bengal the amounts spent on colleges, secondary schools and primary schools are respectively 28 per cent., 32 per cent., and 40 per cent. of the total amount. Obviously if any great advance is to take place in university education, a decreasing, yes, a *largely* decreasing share, will go to university education. Every educational proposal in India is limited by the extent to which Government can contribute toward its realisation. On our local platforms, however, little heed is paid to this in the eloquent appeals for universal and compulsory education. Perhaps these appeals might be less heated if the financial implications were made more obvious. An increase in government expenditure in one branch of education will mean a decrease in some other branch. In

this particular question both the duty and responsibility of Government lie in extending primary education. No government accepts as a duty the provision of university education to the detriment of its more vital duty. Yet in India any considerable steps taken towards the realisation of universal primary education must involve the diminution of grants to colleges. This implies, if the colleges are to exist, a rise in private contributions, the chief of which is fees ; and a rise in fees would, I think, be a more vocal complaint than the lack of primary education.

With increasing revenues, it is true, the Governments of India, central and local, may be able to provide funds for university education in their present proportion as well as for primary education. The revenues of Government are not a static fund ; they are elastic : but so are the various demands made in them. The educational budget is only one among many, and in the educational budget the relative claims of the various sub-heads have to be weighed carefully. Naturally the claims of education on the purse of the Government of India are somewhat disproportionate. Although western education in India is not a century old, its development has been extremely rapid, and the rapidity has been increased by the fact that the western systems, already formed, act as magnetic ideals. These working ideals raise aspirations which demand more hasty realisation than the financial condition of the country can stand. Insomuch as political progress depends mainly on education the demand for education is the most insistent of all demands, and in a country where a constant war is waged between what is financially possible and theoretically desirable, it may be well to examine the financial basis on which the most advanced part of our educational system rests.

Both the University of Calcutta and its colleges depend on three main sources of revenue—fees, endowments or contributions, and government grants. The first

of these is by far the most important. Endowments, save in the new Science College of the University, are small and unimportant. Government colleges are supported by Government, the grants to the colleges being determined in the annual budget. All fees in Government colleges are credited to the Treasury. In aided colleges Government supplements the college incomes by recurring grants. In unaided colleges the main source of revenue is fees. Government, however, sometimes gives grants to them for special purposes, such as the building of hostels ; but no recurring grant is given. In some Missionary colleges, Britain, or some other source outside India, provides grants. Such are the main sources of income. At this stage I desire to bring into prominence both a fact and an attitude with which the members of the coming Commission may be unfamiliar. When one is in straits financially, 'turn to Government' seems to be a maxim in Bengal for any and every purpose. Government is looked upon as an inexhaustible gold mine. In the west we are familiar with high endowments : in fact the idea of establishing a university without endowments would never be entertained. But in India Government is looked on as the permanent endowment fund, and so generous has Government proved that the average individual regards it obligatory on Government to be such. At the same time (granted that the socialistic idea underlying this is correct) Government does not find it easy to introduce new taxation the burden of which will be felt by those who benefit by the endowment. The demand for universal and compulsory education is theoretically admirable ; but the corollary of a tax or rate of one or two annas per rupee to make it possible is not so palatable. Recently in a debate in the Senate of Calcutta University it was proposed to defray the extra expenses involved in the new post-graduate system by raising certain university fees. The proposal was carried, but only after very

vigorous opposition on the ground that the Government of India should be asked to provide the funds. The incidence of these extra funds would ultimately have been largely on the cultivator, the person least likely to benefit by intensive post-graduate study. University education in India will remain in an insecure position till public spirit brings forward more endowments like the recent Palit and Ghose donations. Our universities are weak, not only in themselves, but also because the schools are weak. The improvement of the University consequently implies the improvement of the schools. Government or public funds must, therefore, be devoted more towards the improvement of schools ; private funds must be looked to to support the higher branches of education.

A sound test of a real need for university education is the will of the people to pay for it. Government has throughout insisted on testing the genuineness of requests for capital grants by demanding a certain proportion of local contributions. These contributions are indeed tests of a real demand, but in most cases they represent only a proportion of capital outlay. Recurring expenses have to be met mainly from fees. Fees have risen gradually, though almost imperceptibly, during the last half century, but in no sense can the fee standard really be said to have been tested ; and such tests as exist do not prove the impossibility of increasing fees. An analysis of some local facts and figures will bear out my meaning.

There is no uniformity in the fee charged at the various colleges affiliated to Calcutta University. Among arts colleges the highest fee charged is that of Presidency College, which is Rs. 12 a month. Other Government arts colleges for men charge Rs. 6 a month. The fees of private colleges vary considerably : Rs. 5, As. 8 is a rough average. A smaller fee is accepted by colleges which teach only to the intermediate standard, and some institutions charge science students at a higher rate than arts students.

The 1915-16 returns for Government colleges show that in colleges which charged less than Rs. 6, Government incurred an expenditure of Rs. 1,53,970, whereas the fee receipts were only Rs. 81,305. Till the present year, when the fees of Government colleges which charged less than Rs. 6 were raised to Rs. 6, there had been practically no variation in the fee standard in Government colleges for over half a century. In the meantime at the expense of Government the standards of education had risen very much. The fee of Rs. 12 charged at Presidency College was fixed in 1866, but the College of 1866 scarcely bears comparison with the College of to-day. The increased cost has been particularly marked in science subjects where bigger staffs, more fully equipped laboratories, both in permanent and recurring materials, are necessary. Government has all along acted as a permanent endowment to Government colleges. The bigger colleges such as Presidency and Dacca Colleges are as finely equipped colleges as any in India, and infinitely better than most. Such equipment would have been impossible had it not been for the liberality of Government. From the necessities of Indian finance if Government is to undertake any considerable scheme for the expansion of primary and secondary education, the free expenditure for university purposes will have to be curtailed.

What induced Government to set the rates of one college at double or treble the rates of its other colleges is difficult to determine. Perhaps the deciding idea was the theory that there should at least be one model institution with a better type of education than that given in the others. How the fee rates of the other Government colleges were settled is equally obscure. The fee rates of the smaller colleges are equal to or greater than, but in no case less than, the fees normally charged at aided or private colleges; but while Government can make up deficits in her own colleges, aided and private colleges

must make ends meet with the funds they can command from fees or fixed recurring grants from Government. The biggest colleges in Calcutta are totally unaided, depending practically solely on fees. The principles on which these colleges settled their fee scale are as obscure as those on which Government acted. The several ideas determining the scales seem, as I pointed out in my last article, to have been the two-fold desire to attract students and to produce Government servants. The virgin university soil required manure and the manure given was a low fee standard. The later developments of our University have, however, brought into prominence several by-products of the financial system. For example, colleges now charge competitive prices : this is especially the case with colleges whose very existence depends on fees. The fee-system, further, has become more or less fixed ; any rise would lead to at least temporary hardship and, incidentally, much clamour. The social system of the country has adapted itself to the new education, and deep rooted economic issues hang thereon. In the educational, political and social labyrinth that has grown or been erected in the last fifty years it is very difficult to find one's way : above all it is impossible to determine, on any known theories of governmental functions, either what is the position or what the responsibility of Government.

In the present system it is possible for a student to become an arts or science graduate at an annual expenditure (both fees and living included) of anything from £8 to £15 a year. With the very liberal system of scholarships and free-studentships many can go through a full university course for an average annual expenditure of two or three pounds. It is not surprising, therefore, that there should be a large number of competitors for degrees. Sir Alexander Pedler, when Vice-Chancellor of the University, drew attention to the impossibility of providing anything like efficient



education at such a rate. "How can really efficient university education be given for £8 a year, and much less £2 a year?" asked Sir Alexander, in his address as Vice-Chancellor in 1906, and "How can Science be taught with laboratories, together with the appliances for lectures for £2 or even £8 per head per annum?"

The only course open to colleges which have to depend on fees is to secure revenue by taking in as many students as possible. The result is painfully obvious in many colleges in Bengal. Buildings are crowded, staffs overworked, students under-taught. Colleges lose all sight of educational efficiency in a mad desire to make money. The University might naturally be expected to intervene. It has not, however, financial control over colleges, and the university regulations regarding minimum accommodation and size of classes are easily overcome by makeshift arrangements. Examples have just been "discovered" in Calcutta by the Syndicate, though most people have been aware of the enormities for some time. One hears ugly rumours of as many as six hundred students in one year, taught in batches of one hundred and fifty, by ill-paid and ill-qualified teachers. One or two colleges, it is said, contain nearly two thousand students with accommodation suitable for about as many hundreds. In one college provision has been made for six hundred "plucked" students in addition to a huge number of ordinary students. Where the ruling idea of a college is that two thousand students paying six rupees each give twelve thousand rupees monthly income, the teaching and organisation have to take an inconspicuous back seat. In reading of cases like these one is overcome with a feeling of complete helplessness. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*

It is scarcely surprising that the degrees of the University, which on paper seem to be as high as any in the world, should be worthless. With the present financial basis it is hopeless to look for the buildings, equipment or staff that

even the weakest of western universities possess. What happens, of course, is that the lowest possible standard of efficiency is accepted by both colleges and the University. The better colleges are dragged down by the weaker, which are much in the majority; improvement is discouraged because it is not necessary. That these are not mere generalisations I trust will be proved to the Commission by a tour of inspection. Familiar as they are mainly with British universities, they will be somewhat startled to see the buildings, equipment and surroundings of many of our local university colleges. With some notable exceptions they will search in vain for the stately edifices, finely equipped laboratories, and highly qualified staffs with which they are accustomed in their own universities. They will see huge barrack- or barn-like houses, divided and sub-divided, with storeys added here and wings there, serving as university colleges. They will find ill-equipped laboratories; instruments gilded with the rust of years; libraries packed with text and cram books. They will be surprised to find men teaching in university colleges to whom they would refuse admittance to a secondary school in England or Scotland. They will enquire, doubtless, about playing fields and students' unions which do not exist. They will, too, hear men, called Professors, complain of exiguous pay, long hours, and conditions generally deplorable. They will marvel that in individual colleges in Calcutta there are as many students as would constitute two self-contained universities in Britain. They will marvel still more at the accommodation and teaching provided at these colleges. They will, too, desire to know where and under what conditions the students reside. And when they have seen for themselves the local marvels, they may ask whether they have come to enquire about a university at all. The institution is called such, indeed but it has sorely belied its name and ideals. It has (or some of its colleges have) dragged down to the

lowest level a name which should be used with reverence and love by every citizen in the land.

It is to be hoped that the Commissioners may be given an opportunity for enlightenment by a scrutiny of the financial condition of the colleges. Where education is handed over a counter at a competitive price not unnaturally the cheapest article that will satisfy the demand is given. Trading thus in matters of the mind however is fraught with danger, and little sympathy will be shown if under a sterner *régime* some of the old firms perforce drop out. Plain words are necessary at a time like this. The Commission has been caused by local aberrations from the true path; and the full unvarnished truth must go before it. Some of the financial truths will be unpalatable to every one concerned, but till the rock bottom is reached the plummet has not done its work.

It is almost inconceivable that the Bengali parent, even though he has to pay higher fees, should desire the present educational standard to continue. That the Bengali parent is not unwilling to pay for the education of his son in a good college is witnessed by the competition for admission to Presidency College. It is surely not without meaning that Presidency College with fees twice as high as those of other colleges should every year be the centre of the greatest competition for admission. The same is true in zilla schools where the fees are higher than those of aided or private schools. The zilla schools are eagerly sought after, so much so that a selective examination has been established. Again, while many parents object to the raising of fees, they cheerfully pay salaries to private tutors. Raising of fees implies raising of efficiency, and with the raising of efficiency there should be little hardship. It would be iniquitous for several existing institutions to raise their fees considering the teaching and type of college life that they afford. It is for the Commission to say once and for all whether these colleges

are to continue in existence. Little wonder is it that there should be a continual *tana tane* among colleges when their educational standards and aims are so diametrically opposed. Yet we hear of co-operation in Calcutta University ! Behind co-operation must be common aims and ideals, but such community in Calcutta is supplanted by its chief enemy.

Were a general raising of fees contemplated one of the first pleas to be heard against any such move would be that of poverty. In so far as the existence of a system for half a century gives rise to expectations of its continuance, this cry is not without legitimate foundation. Parents, in arranging for the education of their sons, make their plans on existing conditions and suddenly to alter these conditions would give reasonable ground for complaint. It would be a distinct hardship for a parent to educate his son to the university stage, for example, and, just as he passed the matriculation examination the fees were raised to a standard beyond his financial powers. Education in India is an investment for the parent as well as the son, and any sudden break in the calculations of the parent would almost be equivalent to the failure of a gilt-edged security. This, however, is not a fundamental matter of principle. It is only a temporary problem of organisation. Our local educational system has grown up much as has the British constitution, but with a different material : it is a series of accidents and temporary measures, and we must attempt to set these accidents and expediency measures on proper lines. Most reforms incur hardships, but hardships are not sufficient grounds for continuing an admittedly bad system. All that reform can do is to make hardships as few as possible.

The investment aspect of education is a true one in all countries, though in the highly developed west it is not so prominent as in India. Parents educate their children to enable their children to "get on" in the world ; the

children accept their opportunities to enable them to make a living and have a good social position. In India, however, the ordinary motives in the west are much modified by social conditions. The caste system with its rigid structure, which places an individual in a position from which education cannot shift him, removes the incentive of advance in social position, so potent in the west. The marriage system and the joint family system take away motives for individual advancement which operate powerfully in the west. They give, however, stimuli in their own way. So many influences outside the normal purview of a western educationist or economist affect our local institutions that it is no matter for surprise that glaring discrepancies in a system borrowed from the west exist. Both normal expectations and local customs raise the idea of investment to a pinnacle unknown in other lands; and one form that this takes in India is the plea of poverty invariably advanced against any rise in the cost of education to the individual, whatever the motives of the fee-raising agency.

The fact that the social customs of the country have been profoundly affected by the new system makes the problem a very delicate one. The delicacy arises particularly in the case of Government interference, for, just as the social customs have engrafted themselves on the educational system, so interference by Government in the system may be interpreted as unwarrantable meddling with matters outside its scope. Not the least powerful of the incentives towards a degree of Calcutta University is the desire for a big dowry. The dowry is only an earnest of the future value of the individual, but it acts as an immediate and pressing motive for sons procuring a degree as early and as cheaply as possible. The old dowry values have been considerably affected by the existence of university degrees, educational qualifications having established a new, and graded, rate. The

investment idea, nowhere more manifest than in this, reacts on the educational system in such a way as to swamp the ultimate ends of the University in immediate family necessities. This, of course, is no argument against the University: it merely shows that even if university education were given for good ends there is danger of considerable alloy in the good metal.

Then, again, there is the joint family system. In the west a man works hard to enable him to set up a home; in India a home makes a boy work hard to support it. A joint family responsibility increases the power of investment, even if it may decrease the individual effort of the subject of investment. From this point of view additional expenses of education should not be a hardship. It is in fact the opposite, for, assuming that additional expenses will be accompanied by additional efficiency, the value of the investment will be increased.

A glance at comparative investment values in Great Britain and India will show how vastly different the positions are in the two countries. In Britain the cost of education varies, say, from £100 to £250 a year according to the type of university. These sums represent only a reasonable minimum; in many cases the cost is more than £250. These figures include both fees and cost of living. In India £20 a year is more than a liberal estimate of necessary expenses. I do not separate fees and other necessary college or university expenses from the cost of living because I wish to compare the total results. In England the Home Civil Service is the highest service a university man can enter by examination. The Indian equivalent is the Provincial Civil Service or the financial department, for, though there is not an actual examination in the former, examination standards are the chief criteria of choice. In England the Home Civil Service man starts at a salary of £150 a year. In India his equivalent starts on Rs. 200 or Rs. 250 per mensem (Rs. 250 is

recommended as a starting point for several services by the Public Services Commission). While the Home Civil Service man, the most successful examination-chosen man in England, starts life (and continues for some years) on a salary often actually one hundred per cent. less than the amount of his annual education expenses, his Indian equivalent starts on one thousand per cent. more.

In speaking of the raising of college fees I have referred only to efficiency in college equipment and teaching. This leaves untouched the thorny question of expenses of living. The influx of thousands of students into Calcutta has made acute a question which, if properly solved, would involve many lakhs of rupees. The erection of residential buildings in Calcutta has already cost the Government of India, since 1911, twenty-six lakhs of rupees. I touch on this question only to meet the possible argument that the standard of life in India is so different from that in Britain that no comparison is possible. The standard of life is different, and nowhere is the difference more palpably shown than in the cost of living to our local students. The difference remains true but it should not be allowed to influence the financial basis of educational institutions as such. Our university degrees should be equal to those in Britain in spite of the standard of living.

It may feasibly be argued that the variation in the standard of living between the average middle class Englishman and the average middle class Bengali leaves a bigger margin for the Bengali to pay for the education of his children. The *will* to pay is quite another question from the *ability* to pay. The latter question involves an analysis of economic question such as I cannot undertake in this article. I recognise that fees must be reasonably proportionate to the ability of the middle classes to pay. I have quoted instances of both will and ability to pay which argue that a good article will find ready purchasers in Bengal. The raising of fees will undoubtedly mean a

reduction in those who can pay. In many cases, however, even the doubling of the present fee standard would be practically unfelt. In other cases a balance will have to be made between self-sacrifice and the future good of the younger generation. The margin of profit to the average Bengali parent is at present enormous, but if raised fees mean increased efficiency in the personalities of sons and the social system generally the future margin of profit will be as great as if not greater than the present.

These remarks may be misinterpreted as the advocacy on my part of a policy of repression. In this case, however, the opposite of repression is my object. National improvement depends on a sound system of primary, secondary, and university education. What I argue against is unsoundness in any one of these branches and unsoundness in the whole. Let us have university education, but give us good primary and secondary education to ensure its success. If we can have university education free after its basis has been soundly laid, so much the better. But that we cannot have, so let us have an efficient system at a reasonable price. Let us avoid a bad system at any price. I am not condemning the poor but clever student : let him have help, private or public. I am *not* advocating the closing of opportunities for the young men of Bengal : I am arguing for greater, wider, more vital opportunities. My views may be wrong : but they are honestly propounded as essential for the true advancement of the country.

From the sketchy analysis given above, certain conclusions may be drawn. In the first place, future schemes of improvement in university education must be conditioned by financial power. The Government of India is likely to concentrate its attention and funds more and more on primary education. The improvement of university education must therefore depend on private



sources of income and endowments, with such residue as the Government budgets can afford to add. The Commission in framing proposals will presumably give a scheme which is financially possible. Such a scheme must therefore preclude all unnecessary waste. Existing buildings must be utilised where possible ; useless ornamentation must be left to such time as finances will permit. One scheme in particular must be carefully weighed, namely, the creation of an expensive university professoriate, or central research institute. We have not reached the stage in university development where public funds can be utilised for this purpose without detriment to more important issues. Central institutes and specialised professorships will not make a university : they are results, not causes. The causes are a sound basis of preparation and a sound financial basis. Financial exigencies, again, demand that further centralisation in an expensive centre like Calcutta should be avoided. Much of the initial expenses of the reorganisation will have to be met by Government, and not unjustifiably, for Government as sponsor to our local University is not without responsibility for the present chaos. But, if the country desires real progress, the future development of the universities must depend more largely on private sources. A scheme, therefore, however elegant on paper will be useless unless the balance is properly held between financial power and ideal reconstruction.

New schemes, therefore, must be framed with due regard to the principle of cheapest efficiency, at least so far as Government is concerned. If private donations enable us to add luxuries to our necessities so much the better. What is primarily required is a scheme, however small its beginnings that will enable us to develop on the proper lines. The present University must, it is true, be dismembered or reorganised ; that is an urgent and immediate necessity. But we must dip into the future, and make room for development without further dismemberment or

unnecessary expense. Wasteful loss of man power, needless overlapping of functions, misuse of buildings and funds, vainglorious ornamentation—all must be avoided.

Under the present system one of the most obvious facts is wastefulness. The geographic distribution of the colleges means waste of both men and money. If every member of the Senate in outlying centres of the University were to perform his senatorial functions properly, he would spend a considerable portion of every year in railway trains or boats. The University or Government has to pay enormous sums for travelling expenses, yet it is impossible for *mofussal* senators to attend every meeting that their University duties prescribe. The University and Government lose money ; colleges lose their teachers ; the University loses the help it should have from its senators. The wastage of life, too, in a system which takes 20,000 boys starting out for the matriculation to make 1,800 B. A.'s is self-evident. Material, as well as life and labour, is wasted. Buildings, equipment, libraries are misused. Functions overlap or are improperly carried out, sometimes with great waste of money, as in the recent matriculation examination. Man power is impaired by the continual bickerings and dissatisfaction caused by the present organisation. Government grants and private funds are wasted in inefficient teaching. Leakage of economic power is notable at every turn in an institution and country where every ounce of it is urgently required.

In view of the recent history of the University it is almost unnecessary to do more than mention the fact which precedes the idea of reorganisation, namely, that the present organisation has broken down. In a University which extends from Rangoon to Patna, from Patna to Katak, from Katak to Sylhet, which controls secondary schools as well as its own colleges, which includes close on half a hundred arts colleges, six colleges for teaching, six law colleges, two medical colleges and one engineering

college and which manages its own post-graduate teaching, the breakdown is not surprising. The recognition of the inability of Calcutta University to do the work of an area greater than France and Germany put together has already been recognised by the Government of India in their promises to create new Universities at Patna, Dacca and Rangoon. This is only a very partial solution to our local problem. The creation of these Universities serves but to relieve the present machine of some of its work ; it does not alter the machine itself. The present pressure of numbers will, it is true, be considerably relieved by these proposed Universities. As I have already attempted to show, however, carving methods like these give no sound solution to the numbers difficulty : in fact, they will only aggravate it by making new centres for its growth. Deep rooted cures are necessary ; and as these cures must from their nature be gradual, the present numbers difficulty will remain for some time. Raising of educational standards, the formation of the community by disinterested public spirit, and the creation of a sound financial basis will take time ; and once they are achieved, it may be that the numbers will return in a new, but welcome, form. To provide for the numbers of the new efficiency standard it is necessary that the scheme proposed by the Commission be capable of both expansion and adaptation.

There are several methods of replacing our broken machinery. I say "replacing" advisedly, for I consider that tinkering and mending will be worse than useless. During the present year valiant attempts have been made at adding to or mending the machine ; but few are satisfied with the result. As I hope to show presently some of the repairs that have been executed have been condemned by the best university engineers in the world. In this respect, and in other respects too, the experience of the Universities of London and Cape Town will repay consideration.

Space does not permit nor necessity demand an exhaustive analysis of London University conditions. The main features of the recent Report of the Royal Commission on University Education in London are too well known to need repetition. Since the foundation of University College in 1826 and of King's College in 1829, there has been a never-ending wrangle on the functions of colleges and their relation to the University. The original idea of University College was that it should be a single-college teaching University, an idea which the foundation of King's College later transformed into a division of functions between teaching institutions and an examining board. The extension of this, with the admission of external students, made London University an all-England University and, practically, an Imperial University. The difficulties of teaching and organisation led to numerous petitions, committees and commissions. One marked feature was the desire of University and King's Colleges to be definitely established as a teaching University, a desire arising from the root difficulty of combining in an organic unity several institutions of different standards of efficiency. This, the supreme difficulty of all federal institutions, has been solved by the recent Commission by definitely marking off certain colleges in London as "constituent colleges" in the University, along with certain university departments, but it is to be noted that immediately following this recommendation comes the note that additional income is required to enable the various colleges named to "take their place in the University." These colleges, in fact, can only be constituent colleges at all by reaching a certain standard of efficiency. The Selborne, Gresham and Haldane Reports all agree in restricting the area of the University proper to the administrative county of London. The Haldane Commission, in fact, concentrates the University in Bloomsbury, even at the expense of moving King's

College. The geographical difficulty so marked in Calcutta has, in London, where the difficulty is far less pronounced, been solved by geographical concentration.

Several other developments of vital importance must be noted in connection with London. The growth of independent universities out of colleges which originally were connected with London ; the unanimity of the Reports of Commissions on the financial waste and overlapping of the old system ; the recognition that the University of London has failed in its initial aims because of the variety and financial independence of the institutions under it ; the lack of power in the University to organise the work of teaching, both to secure efficiency and to prevent overlapping ; the continual friction between the various university institutions ; the complaint that in the faculties owing to the varied qualifications of the members that the greater minds were swamped by the less,—all these have local parallels. Not the least interesting documents in the various Commission Reports on London University are the notes of dissent by several well-known people, including Lord Kelvin, Professors Stokes and Sidgwick and Drs. Welldon and Barry, on the impossibility of combining a teaching and an examining university. Recognising the necessity of an examining university Lord Kelvin, with Professor Stokes and Dr. Welldon, held that in place of one university trying to combine both functions, there should be two universities, one a teaching University, one an examining University. The objections to having two Universities in one town over-ruled this—an objection mainly theoretical, for it has been overcome in Dublin with Trinity College and the reconstituted Royal University, and in New York, with Columbia and New York Universities. The conclusion to which a study of the literature on the subject inevitably leads one is that the difficulties and dangers of the London system are so great that it should, if possible, be avoided. A university

system which in less than a century has required three Commissions, endless committees, debates, ill-feeling, wastefulness, uncertainty and dissatisfaction, stands self-condemned.

The Cape Town example will bear out this contention. The University of Cape Town furnishes a peculiarly fitting analogy. South Africa is a land of great distances, of varied types of population with varied political ideas, and like India it has a federal type of government. The colleges too, in South Africa, in the early days, suffered badly from the want of a proper basis of elementary and secondary education. The reforms of Sir Langham Dale and Sir Thomas Muir completely altered the general education of the country in the lower stages, and as a result there is now the vigorous life so evident in many South African university colleges. The first real university institution was the South African College, founded in 1829. At first it was a cross between a secondary school and a university; now it is to become a full fledged university. In 1858 was instituted the Board of Examiners, the purpose of which was to give uniformity in Civil Service and professional examinations. This was replaced in 1873 by the examining university of South Africa. Many colleges have grown up, some sectarian, some national, some technical, some general. Two colleges, however, have stood head and shoulders above the others, the South African College in Cape Town and Victoria College at Stellenbosch. The University and Colleges in the earlier days were not intimately knit together. College students and private students stood on the same level, and the history of the University has been marked by attempts to secure a closer union. The creation of Literature and Science Committees which met at the various centres in rotation, equivalent in constitution and functions to our local Faculties, was the first step in the unifying process. The inevitable

difficulties, however, of unity over a wide geographic area amongst colleges of varying calibres made real fusion impossible. With the growth of the university idea came the insistence on more intensive teaching, and this insistence has taken an exactly similar form to that in Calcutta University.

In the federal University the College teachers who were interested more in their subjects than in examinations began to chafe under the system which made them "coaches" for external examinations. Their teaching was limited by syllabuses imposed largely by bodies outside their control. The result was not education but cramming. The stronger colleges, such as the South African and Victoria Colleges, felt that their standards were set mainly by the weaker colleges, and their dissatisfaction was increased by a rule, similar to that now existing in Calcutta University, which prevented the teachers in a subject from examining in that subject. So great was the difficulty in securing competent examiners that the rule had actually to be circumvented, and elaborate precautions taken to secure fairness. The difficulty was still more marked in science subjects, and even at present the examinations in practical work are most unsatisfactory.

The late Mr. Cecil Rhodes tried to solve the question by establishing a teaching University. The colleges, it was proposed, should be converted into schools. Local difficulties prevented the realisation of Mr. Rhodes' ideal, the Rhodes scholarships being the result. The first form that the teaching university idea took after the attempt of Mr. Rhodes was that of a federal affiliating institution. This idea was favoured at first by practically every college in South Africa except the South African College at Cape Town. The idea, however, was rejected on further investigation being made. In 1904 the South African College appointed a committee to enquire into university education, and, in one of the most complete and

convincing reviews of university education and organisation ever published, it definitely decided against federation or affiliation in favour of a single-college teaching University. This report was the result of the most exhaustive enquiries. Every vital point was considered; questions were asked from universities in all parts of the world; the conclusions were given after full collation of all enquiries and opinions.

In spite of this weighty document, the other colleges of South Africa considered that affiliation was the best solution. In fact, at the Inter-Colonial Conference on university education summoned by Lord Selborne, the mover of the motion for a unitary university did not find a seconder. This was in 1908. In the meantime very considerable sums of money had been given for university purposes by private individuals, notably Mr. Alfred Beit, Mr. Otto Beit and Sir Julius Wernher. In 1911 the Minister for Education renewed the attempt at solution. His proposal was to establish a new university at Groote Schuur, an estate provided by the late Mr. Rhodes, for advanced study and research. His idea was that the existing colleges should continue to teach to the degree standards, and that the new university should be a post-graduate one. The proposal was so coldly received by both the colleges and the donors of money that it never reached Parliament. In the same year, it may be noted, on the 15th December was signed the historic report of the Commissioners on the University of London, who laid down as a fundamental basis for any University that graduate and post-graduate work should be done in unison. Yet on the 1st of September, 1917, the Senate of Calcutta University, not unanimously it is true, brought into working existence a scheme which in divorcing the two, is directly opposed to the ideas and experience of both London and South Africa.



For the purpose of comparison I must quote still another South African abortive proposal. In 1913 another attempt was made by the Minister of Education to constitute a new University of South Africa. A bill was introduced into Parliament the main provisions of which were the creation of the central seat of the University at Groote Schuur. The entrance to the University was to be not the matriculation, but the intermediate examination, which took place at the end of the first year, leaving a three years' university course. The colleges were to constitute local faculties with representation on the Council and Senate of the University. The examinations were to be conducted by the Professors of the University, the local faculties, and external examiners. The bill pleased no one. An independent teaching university was not established; the University was to be practically a new and competing college; and the substitution of the intermediate for the matriculation was condemned because it was likely to injure the colleges. Instead of the bill becoming an act, a Parliamentary Select Committee was appointed to examine the whole position. While unanimous on the need of reform, the members of the Committee had different views on the solution to be proposed. The Committee, instead of proposing a single solution, indicated the possible methods of solution. These were (*a*) the merging of either the South African College or the Victoria College, or both, in a Central Institution at Groote Schuur, (*b*) the federation of these two Colleges, (*c*) the creation of a new institution at Groote Schuur supplementing the work of the colleges and not competing with them in the graduate stage, (*d*) to establish a separate teaching university at Groote Schuur, incorporating the South African College, the other colleges to be affiliated to the University of the Cape of Good Hope, (*e*) raising both the South African College and the Victoria College to university status, and establishing a federal university for the other colleges.

A Commission, under Sir Percival Laurence, was the result. It recommended the creation of two universities, one incorporating the South African and Victoria Colleges at Groote Schuur, the other incorporating the remaining colleges, at Pretoria. Several qualifications were added of no particular concern to us here. The Commission found the financial difficulties insuperable, and their proposed division of funds led to the fifth course suggested by the previous Committee being ultimately adopted as the solution. The Victoria College had, unlike the South African College, held back from demanding University status because of its insufficient endowments. In 1915, however, this difficulty was removed, and the long drawn battles of South African University education were concluded last year. Three bills were passed for the creation of new Universities—the University of Cape Town (incorporating the South African College), the University of Stellenbosch, and the federal University of South Africa. The solution, the Government having guaranteed Transvaal interests being properly looked after, is universally welcomed.

The South African example is very instructive for us in Bengal. Unlike London, both South Africa and Bengal are mills where more than educational problems are threshed. Interests not in themselves educational often have clouded the true aims of education. In London, Cape Town and Calcutta, however, there are many common features. Space forbids any detailed examination of parallels; but, not forgetting the danger of analogies, I may, in a few paragraphs, mention some salient features and at least one possible line of solution.

In both London and South Africa one of the most marked features has been the impatience of the federal system shown by strong colleges. An ideal federal system presupposes units of equal strength. In the political world as a system of federal government the United States is more perfect than Germany, for, while the various States

in the American Union are more or less equal, in Germany the dominating power of Prussia, the largest and strongest, completely over-rules the others. In a university federal system the same truth holds. Oxford and Cambridge are successful federal unions because the colleges are roughly equal, and fused in their Universities by a common spirit and long tradition. They are, too, geographically contiguous. Just as it is impossible to combine the British Empire in a federal union because of geographical difficulties so it is impossible to make a successful federalism in a university of units widely separated by land or sea. A confederation is possible, indeed, but a confederation from its very nature has not the strength to realise the common aims which actuate it. Politically, confederations are loose unions with sovereignty belonging to the parts not to the whole, and for effective working either the parts must be independent or the sovereign power be given to the whole.

A developing system tends towards concentration, not diffusion. The concentration may be either in the whole or the parts, the direction being decided by the nature of the parts themselves. The federal system is a particularly useful solution to a temporary difficulty: where there is a real but unsatisfied want for university education over a wide geographic area, it unites into a whole units which cannot stand by themselves. As the units gain in strength they develop into distinct and independent organisms. Offshoots of London have become as good universities as London is itself. The South African and Victoria Colleges are both to become independent universities. In both London and South Africa the federal principle is to continue. In the one case it is to live through the incorporation of constituent colleges of approximately equal standard in a small area; in the other it is to be the unifying agency for a number of colleges which cannot yet stand on their own feet.

Although the Commission will find the financial position almost hopeless in one respect, it will rather clear than block the way. Questions of endowments which have raised so much trouble in London and South Africa will not be prominent in Calcutta. The central difficulty is simply where to find the money. On financial soundness depends the efficiency of the organisation, and, to my mind, the financial position offers a hopeful line of reorganisation. At present the chief "endowments" of colleges are government grants; a government university therefore is the logical result. State universities are non-British, it is true, but America has proved their efficiency. The Universities of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and California can well take their place by the side of Johns Hopkins, Chicago (Rochefeller's) and Leland Stanford Universities. In India one University, Benares, has been established by private donations, and there will be another at Aligarh. But, though both British and American Universities owe much to sectarianism, sectarian Universities will not solve the Calcutta problem. The problem facing us is simply how to organise efficient university education for the population of Bengal as a whole. If the standards of efficiency, depending on financial support, are to diverge as much in the future as they have in the past, then surely it is better to secure at least *one* institution the efficiency of which can be guaranteed. It will be as fatal in the future as it has been in the past to connect in a nominally co-operative union institutions like Presidency College in Calcutta and the latest creations of sub-divisional enthusiasm. The theory of an efficient state university is as feasible as the accepted theory of model colleges, and far more logical, for model colleges cannot remain model in a non-model medium of work.

For the organisation of a state university the experience of the past points to either single-college teaching units or to a federal union in a small area. With our existing

material, this idea in practice would mean the incorporation of the Presidency, Sanskrit, Medical, Hare, and Sibpur Colleges with a new Government Law College in one University. At first it may be necessary to have incorporated schools of this University, such as the Bethune College. The savings effected from joint working would recoup the additional expenses of organisation. A union like this amounts practically to a single-college university, as each college has its own purpose.

A state university such as this would only touch the problem. Patna, Dacca and Rangoon will presumably absorb a large number of students ; but even then a large area remains to be served. Although further concentration in Calcutta should be avoided, the existing colleges must be utilised. The non-government colleges in Calcutta, aided and private, should be brought together as Calcutta University. A very powerful controlling body will be necessary to bring and keep up the standards of efficiency in several of these colleges. The restriction of numbers which will be necessary for the new standard of efficiency, will require still another university of a federal type. In this university teaching and examining should not be combined. The university should be a supervising agency like New York University, and an examining body. Presumably with the reforms in the present intermediate stage necessary for a sound preparatory education, many of the second grade colleges will gradually become high schools. In this federal university, the best teaching and equipment should be definitely concentrated on selected colleges, colleges which, when the country is more developed, will be likely to develop into teaching universities by themselves. The principle of the survival of the fittest will regulate the other Colleges in this University.

That the idea of a single-college teaching university has not been lost officially in the interminable troubles

which federal universities bring is clear from the following remark in the 1913 statement of educational policy by the Government of India. "It may be possible hereafter," says the statement, "to sanction the conversion into local teaching universities, with power to confer degrees on their own students, of those colleges which have shown the capacity to attract students from a distance, and have attained the requisite standard of efficiency." At present there are many colleges which, in the course of time, might become natural centres for universities. The Cotton College at Gauhati and Rajshahi College are examples. If university organisation is to follow provincial and divisional organisation the ideal of one division, one university may be an ultimate end to keep in view.

The co-existence of several universities will require certain elements of common organisation. A common matriculation board will at first be necessary, though any one of the universities may find it necessary to have a special entrance examination of its own. Beyond this, each university should work out its own salvation. The inter-university competition will prove salutary in many respects, and not the least of these will be the creation of a university spirit among students which does not or cannot exist at present. Competition of educational standards will be good for all; in fact one of the elements of weakness in our present system is that the present University has everything its own way. However much individuality a college may possess, the shackles of the whole University cramp and crush it. Another thing which experience has shown as necessary is strong control. The local tendency to evade rules and find exceptional cases, if allowed to go very far, soon eats away the heart of any institution.

It may be argued, too, that the creation of six Universities (for Rangoon, Dacca and Patna must be included) is not consistent with my previous insistence on

economy. I have not insisted on economy at the expense of efficiency, and as far as I can see, efficiency cannot possibly be reached without a solution such as I suggest. I may repeat that I consider it quite unnecessary in our present state of general and university education to create expensive university professoriates. The time has not come for our local universities to import world-famed men on princely salaries. The universities have a long way to go before this can be justified, and when the time does come it is to be hoped that the universities themselves will provide their own material. The existence of two universities in Calcutta, it may be objected, will jeopardise the existence of the colleges in this proposed federal university. The state university would, it may be argued, absorb all the best students. To a certain extent this may be true, but rigid control will have to be exercised over numbers in all the universities. Government may be trusted to be impartial as well as liberal in granting aid to non-government colleges; but increased revenues from private funds must be forthcoming if we are to have increased efficiency. Universities are not created or continued by governments: they rest on the will and desires of the people. If the people wish efficiency they must do their best to secure it. To continue inefficiency may be temporarily useful for investment purposes, but Government can hardly be expected to foster a system which eats away the roots of the national life. That is exactly what the present system is doing: it is engaged in a process of mental, physical and national attrition. The result may be accidental but it is there; and it is for the people of Bengal as well as the Government to take steps to remove the cause of degeneration.

Reorganisation on scientific lines will lead to the plea of hardship. Vested interests will cry from the housetops. The Commission is unlikely to interfere with the good

vested interests, but to leave some of the vested interests untouched would be as immoral as are the interests themselves. Little sympathy is necessary for those who have hanged themselves by their own rope. All new laws create hard cases, but the world must have new law. The process of readjustment may produce minor evils, but the readjustment, when completed, removes all the evils.

During this year there has been a considerable amount of preliminary brushing up. Even after the appointment of the Commission one of the largest and most contentious reforms was introduced in the University. This scheme, the central idea of which was co-operation among the colleges in Calcutta, when it came up for actual sanction was not only opposed by one who was a member of the Committee which drew it up, but actually shown by Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee himself to be impossible in its original idea because of the weakness of most of the Calcutta colleges. The actual form the idea of co-operative working took was the appointment of nearly fifty university teachers with no college connexion at all! The revelation and recognition of the inefficiency of the majority of the Calcutta colleges by Sir Ashutosh, who has been so intimately connected with our local university development, cannot lightly be passed over. However good his intentions in the new post-graduate scheme, he has had to recognise the impossibility of its central idea because of inefficient medium in which to work.

I have already far exceeded my limits of space, yet I have not so much as mentioned many important issues. The relation between the present university standards and the requirements of government service, for example, is a problem of considerable importance. The housing of students has only been mentioned in passing, but it is a question demanding the gravest consideration. The future of higher technical education, too, is closely bound up with the University. These and many other things must



perforce be omitted. I have tried to bring the main issues to the forefront, and in doing so am aware that my statements and proposals may not be popular. The time has come for straight talking. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, must be placed before the Commissioners. Suave words and sympathetic phrases will serve no purpose to a Commission which would never have been appointed were they true. Our *amour propre* may be injured by what may be said about us, but let us keep in view the fact that we have now an opportunity to initiate a university system rooted in the common good.

R. N. GILCHRIST.

*Krishnagar College.*

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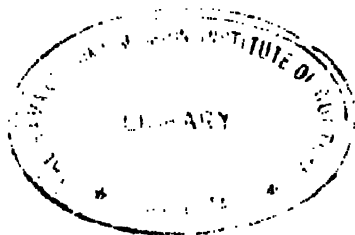
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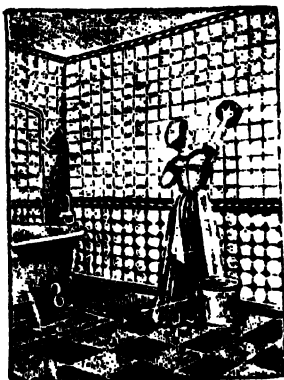
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